



Andy Warhol's Afterview

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IN THESE TIMES

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Former Sen. John Tower

Was Israel really Irangate's bad guy?

By John B. Judis

WASHINGTON

As I wrote last week, the Tower Commission report strongly implies that without Israeli suggestion and encouragement the White House would not have tried to trade arms for hostages with Iran. Such an account of the Iran scandal places a large part of the blame on Israel, and paints Reagan administration officials as dupes and incompetents rather than unprincipled schemers.

INSIDE STORY

Israel definitely played a large role in the Iran scandal and perhaps in the contra aid scandal as well. Seeking to restore the close relationship with Iran that had existed under the shah and to find markets for the country's arms industry—the largest manufacturing industry in Israel—the Israelis sought to win American approval for their arms deals and to draw the U.S. back into a diplomatic and military relationship with Iran. But both the Senate Intelligence Committee and Tower Commission reports may nevertheless have exaggerated Israel's role.

There are striking inconsistencies and omissions in the

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Senate Intelligence Committee and Tower Commission accounts of how American administration officials first conceived of trading arms for hostages (see *In These Times*, March 11). Both committees appear to have accepted without question the testimony of the principal White House intermediaries, former National Security Council counterterrorism consultant Michael Ledeen and former National Security Adviser Robert C. McFarlane.

An adventurer: In his testimony to the Tower Commission, Ledeen claimed that he was the first Reagan administration official to hear of an arms for hostages proposal—at a meeting in Israel in mid-July 1985 with Israeli officials and arms dealers and Iranian arms dealer Manucher Ghorbanifar. This same proposal was then conveyed by then-Prime Minister Shimon Peres' aide David Kimche, who was also present at the meeting, to McFarlane in Washington.

Ledeen is a highly controversial figure. He was denied tenure as a history professor at Washington University in 1974 partly because some of his colleagues suspected him of plagiarism. He moved to Rome in 1974 to study Italian fascism and terrorism and returned to Washington, D.C., in 1977 to join the Center for Strategic and International Studies. Former Italian intelligence agent Francesco Pazienza accused Ledeen of receiving \$200,000 from the Italian spy agency SISMI for a counterterrorism course and the Italian government claimed that Ledeen had used information from Pazienza to attempt to discredit Jimmy Carter's brother Billy.

In January 1987 Ledeen told the *Washington Post* that he had "never been particularly active in Jewish affairs" and didn't have "particularly close ties with Israel," but he was a founding director of the Jewish Institute of National Affairs, a lobby advocating U.S.-Israeli military ties.

In 1981 Ledeen was hired as a consultant by Secretary of State Alexander Haig, and when Haig's aide, Robert McFarlane, became National Security Adviser in 1984, he hired Ledeen to work for the NSC. One of Ledeen's first jobs was to establish contact with the Israelis, who, he claimed, could assist the U.S. in gathering intelligence about Iran.

Ledeen's account of his meetings with the Israelis and Ghorbanifar do not mesh with other published accounts. Ledeen claims that during his first visit to Israel, the topic of hostages never came up. "The topic was improving our mutual understanding of Iran; the subject of American hostages in Lebanon was not discussed," he wrote in the *Washington Post* on January 26 and later repeated to the Tower Commission. But the *Washington Post*, citing official U.S. and Israeli sources and the daily Israeli newspaper *Haaretz*, drawing on official Israeli sources, charged Ledeen with seeking Israel's help in getting the hostages back.

Ledeen claims that he did not hear of a plan to trade arms for hostages until mid-July 1985. But if he didn't hear of it in April or May in Israel—which is highly unlikely if he was interested in freeing Buckley—he probably heard of it in late May in Washington from a former CIA official, Theodore Shackley. Shackley, who was a close associate of retired Gen. Richard V. Secord, a key player in the contra and Iran scandals, told the Tower Commission that he met with Ledeen and briefed him about a report he made of a November 1984 meeting he had had with Ghorbanifar. Ghorbanifar, Shackley told Ledeen, had proposed a plan for exchanging arms for hostages. Shackley said that Ledeen asked him for a copy of the report and also wanted him to find out whether "a channel...is still open."

Ledeen told the Tower Commission that he never read the report, but simply gave it to Lt. Col. Oliver North, his superior at NSC. Such a claim does not jibe with Ledeen's vaunted curiosity and with the strong interest in the report he had expressed to Shackley. But even if he did not read the report, Ledeen would have heard from Shackley at this meeting in May, if not earlier, that a plan to exchange arms for hostages was being proposed.

What explains the inconsistencies and apparent contradictions in Ledeen's testimony? Ledeen may have been trying to portray himself as an innocent abroad—one who had had the proposal of trading arms for hostages thrust upon him suddenly and unexpectedly in mid-July by the Israelis. Unlike other American officials, Ledeen was probably not trying to blame the Israelis, only to maintain his reputation as a professional anti-terrorist,

but the effect of his story was nonetheless to cast blame on the Israelis.

McFarlane and Haig: McFarlane claimed that prior to approving the Israeli arms deal in August 1985, he had not been aware that from 1981 to 1985 Israel had been selling arms to Iran. According to the Senate Intelligence Committee report, McFarlane "testified that if he had known that the Israelis had previously shipped arms to Iran, it would have made him less responsive to later Israeli proposals to resume shipments."

But a *Washington Post* story last November flatly contradicted McFarlane's testimony. According to the *Post*, Secretary of State Alexander Haig approved an Israeli arms shipment in 1981 following discussions at the State Department between David Kimche and Haig's counselor, Robert McFarlane. According to a source that the *Post* claimed had "first-hand knowledge," "The Iranian fascination cropped up and Bud McFarlane supported it five years ago."

McFarlane's protestations of innocence become even less plausible when weighed against the persistent reports over the last five years of Israeli arms sales to Iran. One military expert for an Israeli lobby told *In These Times*, "The idea of the Israelis shipping arms to Iran cannot have escaped official notice."

In his Senate testimony, McFarlane also claimed that he had not become aware of Ghorbanifar's identity until December 1985, but McFarlane referred to Ghorbanifar by name in a July 14, 1985, cable to Secretary of State George Shultz.

The Tower Commission's chief investigator, Brian Bruh, doesn't recall the commission questioning McFarlane about these apparent inconsistencies. But they suggest that high American officials may still be concealing the degree to which the U.S., rather than Israel, initiated the arms-for-hostages deal.

Is it possible that American officials set the Israelis up, leading them on so that they would appear to initiate a proposal that the U.S. had contemplated from the beginning?

CIA reports: Another significant omission of the Tower and Senate reports bears on this question. According to both reports, the CIA and National Security Council in late spring 1985 tried to develop a national security decision directive on Iran. According to the Senate report, the final NSC draft, which called for arms sales to Iran as a means of combatting Soviet influence in Iran, was based in part on a five-page memo from the CIA. But what neither report mentions—and what was reported widely in the press last December—is that the CIA memo was prompted not only by geopolitics, but by a desire to win Buckley's release through an arms deal. By omitting this detail, the Senate and Tower reports reinforced the impression that the Israelis—not the Americans—had invented the notion of trading arms for hostages.

What is at stake here is not merely the historical record. If Reagan has tried to evade his responsibility by pleading forgetfulness, his officials may have tried to evade their responsibility by blaming the Israelis.

Hellfire and Brimstone!

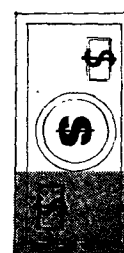
A voice from on high—it sounded like Pat Robertson or Oral Roberts—has warned us that unless we raise the balance of our \$125,000 fund drive in six weeks, one staff member a week will be turned into a pillar of salt.

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By Daniel Lazare

HACKENSACK, N.J.

PERHAPS THE BEST WAY TO SEE THE "BABY M" trial now winding down in a crowded state courtroom here is as an ironic counterpoint to the modern feminist movement.

Two of the leading figures in the dispute are highly accomplished professional women. Elizabeth Stern, the would-be adoptive mother, is a 41-year-old professor of pediatrics at the Albert Einstein School of Medicine who put off having children while earning a master's degree in chemistry, a Ph.D. in genetics and a medical degree. Lorraine Abraham, a local attorney who has been serving as Baby M's court-appointed legal representative, is a veteran of women's consciousness-raising groups of the early '70s who went on to establish the first all-women legal firm in New Jersey's affluent Bergen County.

The other major woman in the dispute, however, comes from virtually the opposite end of the social and educational spectrum. A high-school dropout with two children by the time she was 18, Mary Beth Whitehead is a housewife who is content to remain that way and, in fact, has criticized Elizabeth Stern for saying she would entrust Baby M to a sitter while she returns to teaching. When her husband lost his job driving a garbage truck, Whitehead went on welfare and worked as a barroom dancer to make ends meet.

She agreed to become a surrogate mother not only for the money, she testified, but because she thought that "if I was to give somebody a child," God would help her infertile sister conceive. Yet when the baby was born, she sobbed for days on end and fled to Florida in a desperate effort not to give the child up. When William Stern, the genetic father, placed a lien on her house and bank account and hired private investigators to track her down, she threatened in a tearful long-distance telephone conversation to kill not only herself but her child as well.

In short, Whitehead is housebound, impulsive and emotional, about as far from today's ideal of liberated professional woman as one can get. Yet in this instance she appears to be the victim of class oppression, and two female professionals—not to mention the child's genetic father and an unsympathetic, class-based legal system—are struggling to keep her in her place. Whitehead's rights have been violated, her privacy has been invaded and her role has been degraded to what one expert witness hired by the Sterns called "a surrogate uterus."

Her visits with her child have been limited to four hours a week under the watchful gaze of an armed prison guard. She has been forbidden to breastfeed. Her rocky family finances and marital troubles have been analyzed and exposed before dozens of reporters. As the child advocate, Lorraine Abraham has formally urged that Whitehead be barred from seeing her child for at least five years and that custody be awarded to the Sterns—in part, as Abraham told a local reporter, because their \$90,000-a-year income makes them better equipped to deal with whatever "special problems" the child might develop.

Meanwhile, a battery of psychological experts hired by Abraham has diagnosed Whitehead as suffering from a "mixed personality disorder" because, among other

things, she dyes her hair and lays out her husband's and older children's clothes in the morning. In one memorable moment, Marshall D. Schechter, professor emeritus of child psychiatry at the University of Pennsylvania Medical School, testified that she was obviously incompetent as a mother because he observed her exclaiming "hooray" when Baby M clapped her hands, whereas "patty-cake" would have been the correct response. Dr. Schechter also criticized Whitehead for presenting Baby M with a stuffed panda on one of her weekly visits when a bowl, spoon or other kitchen utensil, in his professional estimate, would have made a more suitable toy.

The result has been a kind of parody of class justice in which a business contract, no matter how degrading or unfair, is regarded as sacrosanct and a working-class mother's claim to her child is viewed with suspicion and distaste. Despite Whitehead's agonizing predicament, however, the organized feminist movement has been reluctant to respond. The New Jersey chapter of NOW met recently to discuss the case, but ended up split. In *Ms.* magazine in December, Ann Snitow wrote that while her "first impulse" was to side with Whitehead, she worried, on second thought, that a favorable decision might encourage the view "that pregnancy makes women more naturally the privileged parent in a custody suit."

In a lengthy analysis in the *Village Voice* in November, feminist writer Judith Levine said she sympathized with Whitehead but complained that she was "pleading stupidity...undermining her credibility, and women's" by confessing in court that she had signed the surrogate parenting contract without ever actually reading it. In the end, Levine described herself as "ambivalent."

Boston Globe columnist Ellen Goodman also sympathized with Whitehead, although she said she would award Baby M to the

Sterns because their money and education "appears to offer her a better chance."

A now-familiar story: A little over two years ago, Whitehead answered an ad placed by the Infertility Center of New York, a company run by a Dearborn, Mich., lawyer-cum-baby-broker named Noel Keane. For a fee of \$10,000 she agreed to be artificially inseminated with sperm from a 40-year-old biochemist named William Stern. Although a psychological evaluation at the time found that Whitehead might "have strong feelings about giving up the baby," Keane failed to inform the Sterns, undoubtedly because to do so would have jeopardized his \$7,500 finder's fee.

Then, without benefit of legal counsel, Whitehead put her name to a bizarre document called a "surrogate parenting agreement." To get around New Jersey's strict laws against fees for adoption, the contract specified that the money was solely for the

In this case a business contract appears sacrosanct, and a working-class mother's claim to her child is viewed with suspicion.

service of bearing Stern's child. It stipulated that Whitehead would undergo medical tests "to detect genetic and congenital defects" and would "abort the fetus on demand" if any were found; otherwise, it stated, the father's obligations would cease. The contract also stipulated that Whitehead was "not to smoke cigarettes, drink alcoholic beverages, use illegal drugs or take nonprescriptive medications or prescribed medications without written consent from

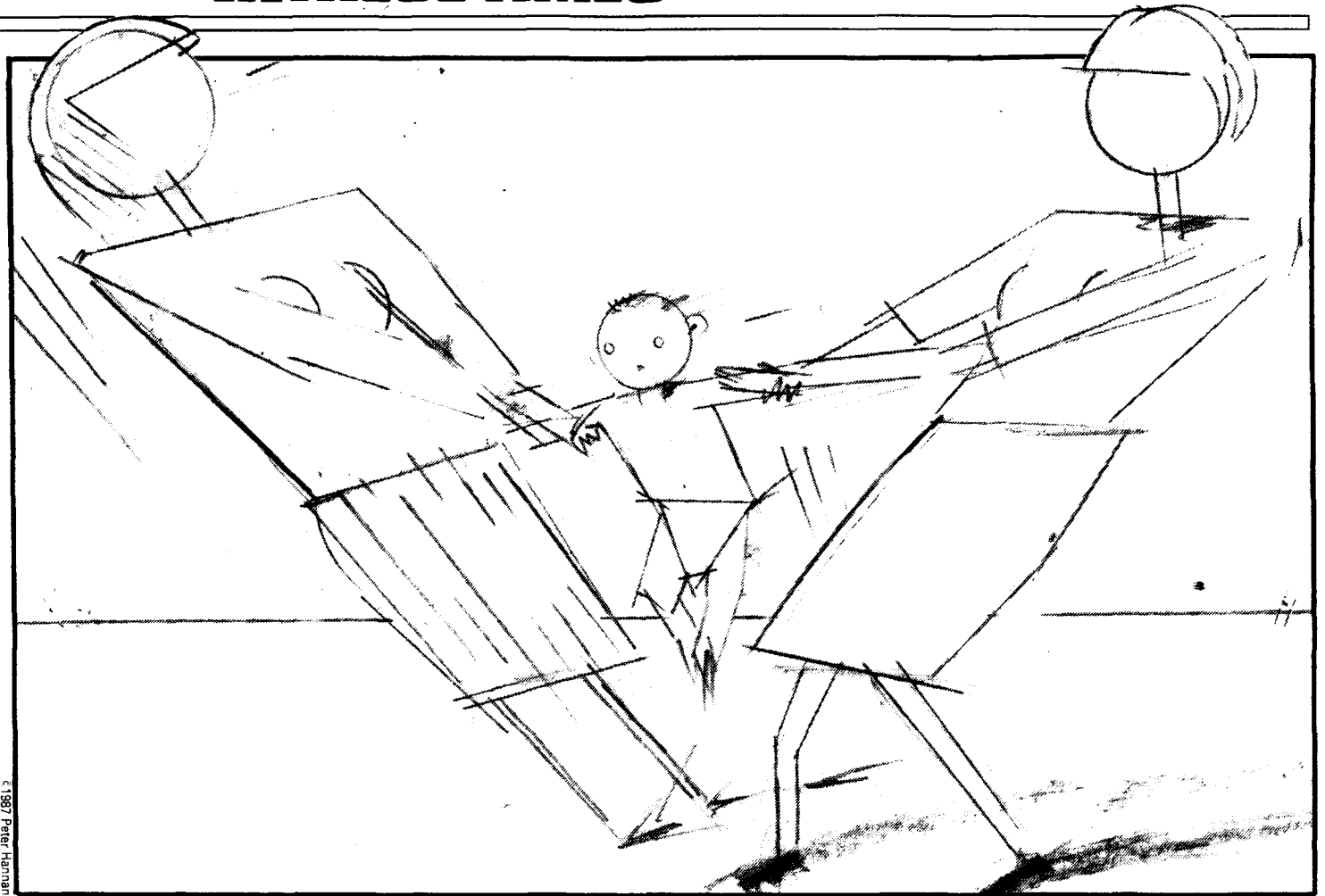
her physician," although it failed to specify a remedy if she refused.

The pregnancy was not an easy one. Whitehead was bedridden during her sixth month with phlebitis, an inflammation of the veins. She put on 50 pounds and, according to a social worker, was "depressed and not sleeping well because of discomfort with the pregnancy."

When the baby was born, Whitehead, newly awakening to the enormity of what she had done, sobbed uncontrollably. Although in signing the pre-natal agreement she had promised "not [to] form or attempt to form a parent-child relationship with any child or children she may conceive, carry to term and give birth to," she violated the contract—and incurred the wrath of the legal system—by developing a fierce emotional attachment to her newborn child.

Downhill from there: Three days later, Whitehead turned the baby—whom she called Sara and the Sterns called Melissa—over to the genetic father. But the next day she was back at their door, weeping and threatening suicide. The Sterns relented and allowed her to take the child. But two weeks later when they asked for her back, Whitehead refused. When the Sterns returned three weeks later with the police and an order from Judge Harvey Sorkow in Hackensack, Whitehead slipped the baby out a back window to her husband and told the police the baby wasn't there. The next day, she, her husband, their two older children and the newest member of their family boarded a plane for her parents' home in Florida.

Private investigators hired by the Sterns succeeded in tracking them down, however, and on July 31 four sheriff's officers and a social worker armed with a court order burst into the home. Whitehead's 10-year-old daughter tried to ward them off with a



Baby M trial: parody of class justice

By Joel Bleifuss

False senility on good faith

President Reagan intended to fund the contras with the profits from Iranian arms deals, according to elder brother Neil Reagan. Neil Reagan, a former journalist, was interviewed March 4 by Pamela Wilson of the *Del Mar Citizen* of Del Mar, Calif. Neil, who said he had not discussed the issue with the president, explained how he thinks the decision to fund the contras through arms sales was made. "It is plain as the nose on your face... He went to Congress and asked Congress for the money for the contras [and was turned down]. So, knowing this, I bet he just went back to his office and said, 'There's more than one way to skin a cat. Get hold of those guys down in Iran and see if they want some armaments.' Then he was under no obligation to go to anyone and say, 'Can I have a couple bucks for the contras?'" Brother Neil also implied that the president is no dotard; that the president's feeble-mindedness is a ruse. "When they say he is forgetful, I bet he is forgetful on everything he wants to be forgetful about." The statement implies the president lied when he claimed to have forgotten when he had approved the arms sales to Iran. "You bet he didn't remember," said Neil. "In fact, I'm sure he worked overtime to make sure he didn't forget to forget." When asked if his brother is letting criticism from the Iran-contra scandal "get him down," Neil replied, "I know him well enough to know he's not there chewing his fingernails off—it's mostly press. I guarantee you, I'm doing more worrying about paying the next income tax payment than he is worrying about what is going on in Washington."

Reagan's regent

Maureen Reagan, for one, disagrees with her uncle. Last week she was trotted out before the White House press corps to tell the world that she "thinks" her dad "was very angry when he learned of some of the thing—of many of the things—that had been done without his knowledge." Which brings us back to a president who appears to be out of touch, out of control and out to lunch. So who is running things at the White House? The day after Howard Baker was appointed chief of staff the *New York Times* headlined its lead editorial: "New Start, New Prime Minister." But if Baker is prime minister, then Attorney General Edwin Meese must be the new regent (in the tradition of George IV, who in the early 19th century was the regent for his deranged father George III). Meese does wield power. According to the *New York Times* of March 1 it was Meese who, along with Nancy Reagan, former Sen. Paul Laxalt of Nevada and White House pollster Richard Wirthlin, picked Baker as chief of staff. Meese's regency is, however, nothing new, according to Ronald Brownstein, author of *Reagan's Ruling Class*. In 1981 when Meese, as counselor to the president, was heading up Reagan's transition team he was referred to by the press as "President Meese." White House aides called him "deputy president" and "prime minister." Meese was compelled later to announce that President Reagan "is really running things."

Nuclear operators on drugs

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), "has allowed drugs, alcohol and nuclear power to form a powerful and potentially deadly mix," says Joshua Gordon, a nuclear analyst with the Critical Mass Energy Project. Last month Critical Mass—the nuclear power investigation unit of Public Citizen, a Washington, D.C.-based public interest organization—released a report titled "Nuclear Power Going to Pot: Drug and Alcohol Abuse at Nuclear Power Plants." The study found that from 1980 to 1985 hundreds of nuclear plant employees, including senior reactor operators, have been implicated in 108 cases of on-the-job drug and alcohol abuse. That substance abuse, according to the report, threatens the well-being of the 150 million Americans who live within 50 miles of a nuclear plant. As NRC documents point out: "Certain personnel could become unfit for duty due to the effects of substances such as alcohol or drugs and, thereby, could perform actions that might adversely impact the health and safety of the public." The NRC has also said that human error is involved in virtually all nuclear accidents. According to NRC internal documents, between 1980 and 1985 there was an "alarming" 600 percent increase in the number of reported drug and alcohol abuse incidents. The NRC also admits that these cases represent "just the tip of the iceberg."

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WHAT MANAGERS
CAN LEARN FROM
MANAGER
REAGAN

“President Reagan has a particular type of management style.” —John Tower

“Style is just the outside of content, and content the inside of style.... they can't be separated.” —Jean-Luc Godard, French filmmaker

With friends like these...

Some House and Senate members are well-informed, intelligent public servants. But others are slow of mind and ignorant. Unfortunately, not a few of these are Democrats. It is painful, for instance, to hear Illinois Sen. Alan Dixon question witnesses before the Senate Armed Services Committee. It was even more painful—hilariously painful—to hear Pennsylvania Rep. Joe Kolter defend on television his bill (HR 360) to withhold \$40 million in funding from the contras.

In November 1982, a key election pitted Pennsylvania state legislator Kolter against incumbent Rep. Eugene V. Atkinson. Atkinson had stupefied local Democrats in this steel district northwest of Pittsburgh by first backing Sen. Edward Kennedy for president in 1980 and then, in the wake of Ronald Reagan's landslide, change his registration from Democrat to Republican. Kolter, of Beaver Falls, defeated Atkinson by 60 to 39 percent. Since then, he has established a liberal record on economic and

foreign policy issues.

On February 4 Kolter appeared on the national call-in show of C-SPAN, the cable network that covers Congress, to defend the anti-contra legislation he is sponsoring. In an appearance that recalled *Saturday Night Live*, Kolter probably created far more opponents than converts to his bill.

In trying to explain to one caller why the contras were not worth supporting, Kolter appeared confused about the politics and leadership of the contra coalition, the United Nicaraguan Opposition (UNO).

"You're talking about the contras as if they are heroes. I wonder if you understand that the contras also are a pure communist group. They are communists just as well as the Sandinistas are. They're just a splinter group. As a matter of fact, there are three different groups down there who form the contras. One is controlled by a man named Uno, the other's controlled by, well, I don't really recall their names. Uh, Cruz. The third I don't recall. But these are actually communists who have splintered from the original

communists...."

To another caller, Kolter gave this version of Central American history, apparently referring to John F. Kennedy's Alliance for Progress:

"We at one time had...it seems to me I recall where at one time in history most of the states in Latin America were communistic, then we had an organization formed that I just can't recall the name of it now, that really showed the value of being a democracy and today democracy is a rule down there in most of the countries down in Central America."

A caller from Cheyenne, Wyo., summed up Kolter's performance:

"After seeing your performance here tonight, I'll have to move to Beaver Falls and run against you.... You thought UNO was a man, and you just got a pay raise.... I have to say, Congressman, I've been watching C-SPAN since the beginning of time, since it first came on, and this is the most dismal unfactual presentation I've ever seen by a public servant."

—John B. Judis

Last stand in the Tongass

Just when it seemed as though major, single-issue environmental battles were a thing of the past, a new struggle is brewing in Alaska. At stake is the Tongass National Forest, a wilderness the size of West Virginia that is being steadily destroyed by two giant logging companies that hold 50-year timber-sale contracts with the U.S. Forest Service. These two companies have, together, received about \$50 million in direct U.S. government timber subsidies in each of the last five years (see *In These Times*, Nov. 19, 1986).

On March 10, environmentalists passed the first step in their campaign to save the Tongass, when Rep. Robert Mrazek (D-NY) and Sen. William Proxmire (D-WI) introduced the Tongass Timber Reform Act. The bill would sharply reduce logging activity in the wilderness. It would also abolish the permanent \$40-million annual subsidy that has kept the Tongass timber companies in business. That subsidy, written into the Alaska Land Act of 1980, has over the past

five years been increased to about \$50 million at the request of the secretary of agriculture. The Proxmire-Mrazek bill would require that all future subsidies of companies logging the Tongass be made on an annual basis through the normal appropriation procedure.

Even more than the Alaskan Pipeline controversy 15 years ago, the battle over the Tongass is shaping up as a decision on the meaning of the nation's last real frontier. The Tongass contains the last great temperate-zone rain forest on the planet, with six-foot-wide, 200-foot-tall, moss-draped trees covering dozens of mountainous islands in the state's southeast panhandle. The forest harbors the continent's largest concentration of grizzly bears and bald eagles, as well as large populations of Sitka black-tailed deer.

Logging not only damages the Tongass environment, it also hurts the livelihood of many southeast Alaska residents. The fishing industry, a multimillion-dollar activity in the region, has loudly opposed current logging practices, claiming that logging destroys salmon-spawning streams. In addition, logging causes significant decreases in

wildlife populations, the source of subsistence for many local Indians and other villagers. Natives also criticize the current logging status quo for creating unfair competition with their own logging industry, which receives none of the multi-million-dollar Tongass subsidies.

From 1977-86, the program's net cost to the U.S. taxpayer was a staggering \$365 million. All this for an industry whose direct and indirect employment hovers around 2,000.

Ann Bennett, legislative assistant to Rep. Mrazek, told *In These Times* that the forest service loses 99 cents on each dollar it puts into Tongass logging operations. The Tongass return is so low because the timber companies have trouble selling the lumber they harvest at the rate of 4.5 billion board-feet per decade—the figure specified in their 50-year government contract.

Faced with this wasteful, boom-and-bust situation, environmentalists hope to keep enough pressure on Washington to force congressional action by the end of summer. In the meantime, the Tongass rain forest remains isolated amid its storms and fog, and the trees keep falling.

—Robert Collier

Rehabilitating Daniel Shays

The yearlong celebration of the U.S. Constitution is getting off to an introspective start in Petersham, Mass.

Petersham was the last stand of Shays' Rebellion, an 18th-century Massachusetts revolt of farmers who—debt-ridden and threatened with foreclosure—rose up against the government to save their belongings and their livelihoods. The rebels, led by Daniel Shays, attacked a U.S. weapons arsenal and occupied several Western Massachusetts courthouses. On Feb. 4, 1787, the state militia, led by Gen. Benjamin Lincoln, finally suppressed the revolt in a surprise attack on the rebels' base at Petersham. History has since cast Shays and his fellow farmers as traitors to what was at that time a fragile new republic.

Last month, two Massachusetts high school teachers challenged the traditional view of the rebellion by erecting a monument in Petersham to honor the long-maligned insurgency leader. The new marker stands beside an existing 1927 monument that celebrates the government's victory over Shays' Rebellion by proclaiming: "Obedience to Law Is True Liberty."

Bill Schechter and Thom Thacker, history teachers at Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School near Boston, contend that historians have given Shays and his followers a raw deal. Their plaque celebrates the insurgents as individuals "who fought for the common people against the established

powers and who tried to make real the vision of justice and equality embodied in our revolutionary Declaration of Independence." The memorial concludes: "True Liberty and Justice May Require Resistance to Law."

Traditionalists view the uprising in terms of the benefits the U.S. reaped after the 1787 insurgency was quashed. The consequent push for a stronger, more centralized government took form when the U.S. Constitution was drafted later that year. Schechter disagrees with this view.

In a statement by the Ad Hoc Committee to Rescue Our National Past, Schechter and Thacker's two-man historical reassessment squad, Schechter argues: "To many farmers and common folk, the lesson was that in order to prevent the heartless propertied classes from taking away the lands and livelihoods of many people, popular action would have to be taken."

"Shays deserves to be celebrated and not condemned," Schechter said at the new monument's February unveiling. He added that Shays, like Henry David Thoreau and Martin Luther King Jr., exemplified a leader not afraid to resist injustice.

Schechter got the idea to erect the new monument when he read the 1927 marker on a trip through Petersham five or six years ago. "I was really surprised by the outright bias of the monument," Schechter says. "It really celebrates Shays' defeat. The sentiment expressed doesn't represent anything of American tradition that I'd like to commemorate."

So Schechter set out to even the

score and, together with Thacker, proposed a new monument to the Petersham Historical Society. He was worried at first that the town's New England conservatism would work against him, but he found the Petersham citizenry open to the idea of an alternative historical marker.

"There's a real sense of ambivalence in Petersham about Shays," he says. "I was impressed by how the people of the town understood history."

On February 4, Schechter and Thacker presented Petersham with a monument they felt more truly represented the role of Daniel Shays and his followers. The unveiling ceremony included the performance of several songs commemorating Shays and an explanation of the plight of farmers in Petersham today. The latter was given by Irene Perkins who, along with her husband and children, operate the last full-time farm in town.

"What I wanted to do was reconnect the event to its original meaning," Schechter says, "to take history out of the classroom and see if some connection couldn't be made to present-day concerns. I wanted to see if we could actually use history to illuminate the present."

He tells of overhearing three elderly town residents contemplate first the new monument, then the old one. "Finally, one woman turned to the others and said, 'You know, when we were growing up, they twisted our arms and our minds. Shays was a great man.'"

—Howie Singer

Patriots unite

Sharing a belief that the U.S. government has ceased to be responsible to the people, supporters and members of the Patriotic Majority held a public forum on Capitol Hill March 5—the anniversary of the Boston Massacre of 1770. Those gathered heard a variety of speakers—including Eleanor Smeal, president of NOW, Sen. Paul Simon (D-IL), Paul Warnke, former director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, and Rep. John Conyers (D-MI)—talk about how to define the country's national interest. Conyers, addressing the overflow crowd, said, "We need public officials who are committed to fight against injustice, tyranny and slavery in every form. And even more, we require a hard look at the process and institutions of government that have permitted president after president to fail his constitutional and moral obligations." The Patriotic Majority is working to achieve a patriotic rebirth in the U.S. based upon the principles of government of, by and for the people (see *In These Times*, July 23, 1986).

War—serious monkey business

The noble savage, and his even nobler great ape cousins, have lost their titles to the recent research of English ape-expert Jane Goodall. Goodall has spent the last 25 years studying a chimpanzee colony in Gombe, Tanzania. In her first book, *In the Shadow of Man*, Goodall demonstrated that chimpanzees possess the more attractive of human qualities. But her recent research published in *The Chimpanzees of Gombe—Patterns of Behaviour* indicates that, like humans, chimpanzees cold-bloodedly murder foreigners. Polly Toyenbee, in a recent issue of the *Guardian* of London, describes Goodall's observations of a chimpanzee war in which some of the apes she had been studying annihilated a chimp community that lived to the south. "A group of males, sometimes accompanied by one aggressive female, would set out in search of animals of the southern group. It was planned, organized and systematic. They seized them separately one by one, jumping, stamping, biting, with one chimp holding the victim down while the others attacked it ruthlessly. All those animals attacked died shortly afterwards. Females were attacked as well, and some of the infants were eaten. In one incident an aggressor drank the blood from the bleeding nose of his victim." Goodall concludes from her research that wars between neighboring populations were a key element in human evolution. To assure its survival in a warring world, a population needed to develop social organization, mechanical skills and advanced planning. Goodall is now studying how early chimp experience shapes future behavior. Check in next decade. Perhaps Goodall will discover that environmental pressures drove the chimps to war—that is, unless some ape in the White House goes bonzo first.

Political fumbles

According to Richard Ryan, Washington correspondent for the *Texas Observer*, if you want to make Texans mad, take away their pigskins. That is exactly what the National Collegiate Athletic Association is going to do at Southern Methodist University in Dallas. The SMU football team, for years one of the nation's finest, is now suspended from play for two seasons, an action that effectively decimates the program. Last week, newly re-elected Republican Gov. "Dollar" Bill Clements turned the SMU story into a political bombshell by revealing that he and other members of the school's board of regents voted to continue the forbidden payments to payers that had gotten SMU's football team suspended in the first place. The scandal has become a regular mud-ride for Clements. Texas oilman Clements was defeated in 1982 by the Democratic state attorney general, Mark White, who ran as something of a populist. White defied hopes and proved to be a middle-of-the-roader who was incapable of dealing with the state's economic woes. The final nail in White's coffin, however, was his "Pass and Play" scheme, a plan he advanced during his last year in office that required high school football players to maintain a certain grade-point average in order to stay in uniform. Though his detractors admired White's last-minute gump-tion, trying to rope a sacred cow is not the most advantageous activity during election year. Clements came back to defeat White decisively last fall. It turns out that before the election White's campaign people got wind of Clements' doings up at SMU, but had no evidence. Had the voters of Texas spotted Clements' unsportsmanlike conduct before the whistle blew, the Lone Star State might have a different quarterback. "Pass and Play" beats "Bribes for Play" any season.

By Jim Heaphy

"I call upon the scientific community who gave us nuclear weapons to turn their great talents to the cause of mankind and world peace—to give us the means of rendering these nuclear weapons impotent and obsolete."

—Ronald Reagan, March 23, 1983

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY'S CENTER FOR Health Services provides much needed community health care for rural Appalachian communities near Nashville, Tenn. For the past 17 years, the center has been headquartered in a distinctive 100-year-old house on the campus.

Recently the university administration asked the center to begin preparations to move to another site. Surprised and disappointed, the center staff resigned themselves to a major relocation. In November they discovered the reason for the move, as the university trumpeted a fund-raising coup in a flurry of press releases. Vanderbilt had obtained a \$6.65 million grant from the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), or Star Wars, and an unusual construction project was being planned. Two-thirds of the century-old house would be temporarily moved and a four-story underground laboratory would be built below to do SDI research. Upon completion of the high-tech warren, the old house would be reassembled above, giving the whole project a respectable and nostalgic cap.

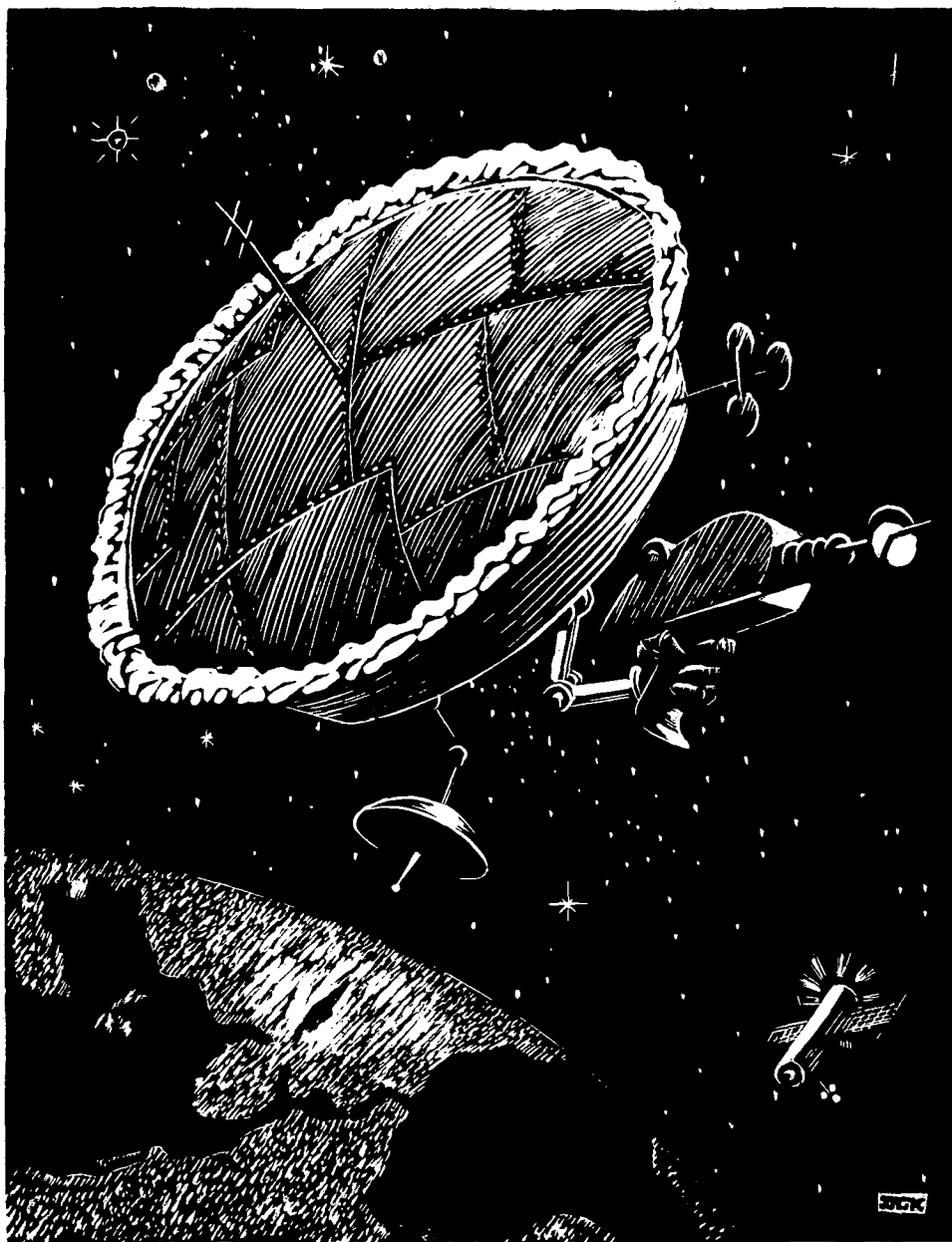
Star Wars soon became a hot issue on a conservative Southern campus.

The Vanderbilt facility will investigate the applications of free electron laser technologies in medicine and materials sciences. Faculty physicians like Dr. Frank Carroll describe their research as a boon to humanity. "People think of lasers in medicine as something that cuts tissue. We think it can be used diagnostically. We're very excited to be working with the physicists."

Carroll and his colleagues hope to use their beams to probe the human body in ways that X-rays or scalpels cannot, and university officials claim that the primary benefit of the free electron laser research will be improved cancer treatments. Physicists at the university say that the free electron laser will aid in developing more durable materials for everything from artificial limbs to spacecraft. Supporters of the laser research center claim that they are happily surprised that the Pentagon wants to spend so much money on innocuous medical and basic research technology.

In fact, though, free electron laser technology is considered among the most promising of the "kill mechanisms" now being considered by SDI strategists. Former presidential science adviser George Keyworth has been one of the most enthusiastic advocates of a bizarre proposal using free electron lasers. Since this specific laser technology is one of the few capable of penetrating the atmosphere on a clear day, gigantic ground-based free electron lasers facilities would be built in desert areas throughout the country.

If the Soviets attacked, the lasers would beam up to enormous mirrors in geosynchronous orbit, 22,300 miles above the Earth. These mirrors would reflect the beams to fighting mirrors in orbit directly above the Soviet Union, which would in turn bounce the beams among the Soviet missiles, destroying them one by one.



Campus scientists say SDI is just pie in the sky

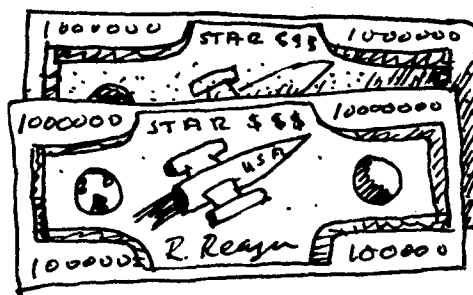
Weapons-grade free electron lasers will probably never be built at Vanderbilt, but clearly the SDI organization hopes the research to be conducted on campus will help improve their understanding of this critical weapons technology.

This outlandish development has spurred opposition at Vanderbilt. Campus opponents have organized a group, the Committee for Understanding, to protest SDI research. They are working with the local Nuclear Freeze campaign to increase awareness of the dangers of Star Wars. This February, 75 students, faculty and staff held a spirited anti-Star Wars rally and picket, which is quite unusual for a campus normally devoid of protest. Campus leaders are determined to do their best to delay or stop the SDI research at Vanderbilt and to ask tough questions of the scientists who choose to participate in the Star Wars madness.

Answering the challenge: President Reagan's Star Wars speech four years ago was an explicit challenge to the country's scientific and academic community. Reagan expressed his confidence that scientific talent could develop defensive technology so effective that nuclear weapons would be abandoned and forgotten. At first by the dozens and then by the hundreds, scientists spoke out against the president's dream, and said it was unreasonable to expect technol-

ogy to come to the rescue and save us from the threat of radioactive annihilation.

By now, nearly four years later, thousands of university scientists have pledged to refuse research funding for SDI during a period when governmental money for non-military research is declining rapidly. Even so, the lure of millions of research dollars is too strong for some scientists to resist—more than 2,600 applications for SDI research money were pending recently, and researchers on dozens of university campuses spent more than \$84 million in the 1985 fiscal year on work related to Star Wars.



The Pentagon's Strategic Defense Initiative Organization (SDIO) is doing its best to belittle the intense opposition to SDI from the academic community. At the same time, it is trying to circumvent that opposition by funneling much of the research funding through off-campus research institutes affiliated in various ways with universities, but

often independent of various campus restrictions on classified military research.

In the months immediately after the Star Wars speech that initiated SDI, the early campaigns to organize scientific opposition to space weapons concentrated on celebrity scientists, especially Nobel laureates. Many of these scientists represented disciplines such as genetics, biochemistry, medicine, geology, psychology and marine biology that had nothing to do with the specific scientific problems associated with a defense against nuclear weapons.

This inspired SDI supporters to counterattack vigorously. Assistant Secretary of Defense Richard Perle ridiculed the qualifications of some of the SDI critics. "I notice that among the scientists who have expressed themselves on the unreliability of the SDI program are biochemists and nutritionists

STAR WARS

and physicians and high energy physicists and others who may or may not be familiar with the details of the program," said Perle.

Dr. James Lonson is director of the SDIO's Office of Innovative Science and Technology (SDIO-IST), the group responsible for funding SDI academic research. "This whole bit that university scientists are against SDI is a lot of propaganda," said Lonson in a 1985 interview with the *New York Times*. "A Nobel laureate in molecular genetics knows nothing about problems of plasma physics. Nothing. Nothing at all."

Lonson claimed that the scientists with the skills to help SDI were eager to participate. "Virtually everyone, on every campus, wants to get involved," he said.

SDI boycott: Although the judgments of a molecular geneticist regarding SDI may be perfectly valid, scientific critics of the program decided to narrow the range of disciplines from which they would recruit when they launched the next phase of opposition to the program. Initiated by scientists at Cornell, the University of Illinois and the University of Pennsylvania, the boycott of Star Wars research funds by university scientists and engineers began in the summer of 1985. The boycott was limited to university departments in academic areas likely to receive SDI funding, such as physics, engineering, computer science, chemistry, space science and mathematics. The pledge statement describes SDI as "ill-conceived and dangerous," and concludes that a missile defense able to protect the population of the U.S. from nuclear attack is "not technically feasible." The statement describes SDI as "a step toward the type of weapons and strategy likely to trigger a nuclear holocaust." Those signing the statement "pledge neither to solicit nor accept SDI funding."

Response to the boycott was rapid and overwhelming. To date more than 6,700 university scientists and engineers have signed the pledge, as have 545 scientists in Great Britain and 1,900 in Japan. In the most prestigious 20 physics departments in the country, a combined total of 57 percent of the faculty signed. This includes the physics departments of Harvard, Cornell, U.C.-Berkeley, MIT, Princeton, Caltech and Stanford. In 109 physical science and engineering research departments at 72 different campuses, more than half of the faculty have joined the boycott.

Organized opposition on the campuses to

the boycott campaign has been minimal. David Wright, a professor of physics at the University of Pennsylvania and one of the campaign's initiators, said, "My experience is that, more than any other subject I can think of, there is overwhelming opposition to the SDI program. The most common explanation we heard for why people did not sign the pledge to boycott SDI funding was that 'the program is clearly crazy, but if the government is going to waste that much money, I want some for my research.'"

Some Pentagon officials would like to punish scientists who publicly express such honest, though cynical, opinions. Undersecretary of Defense Donald Hicks has said he would like to cut off Pentagon funding from scientists who speak out against SDI. "I have a tough time with disloyalty," said Hicks in an interview with *Science* magazine. "If they want to get out and use their roles as professors to make statements, that's fine; it's a free country. But freedom works both ways. They're free to keep their mouths shut, and I'm also free not to give the money."

Robert Parks, director of the Washington office of the American Physical Society, said that Hicks' remarks have "cast a chill over public debate" on SDI.

In December Cornell University's Institute for Social and Economic Research, in cooperation with Cornell physicist Peter Stein, completed a comprehensive survey of members of the prestigious National Academy of Sciences (NAS), asking them their views on the feasibility of Star Wars. As did the boycott campaign, the Cornell researchers limited their study to scientists who work in the physical and mathematical sciences relevant to SDI.

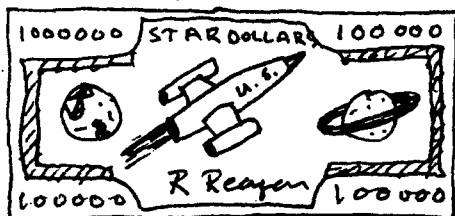
According to Stein, members of the NAS "unquestionably represent the preeminent leaders of American science." The NAS was chartered by Congress in 1863 to advise the federal government on matters of science and technology, and its members frequently serve on review panels to advise on general scientific and technical priorities outside their immediate areas of expertise. Membership is by invitation only, and is considered by many a scientific honor second only to the Nobel Prize.

The researchers used a very systematic methodology to ensure the highest and most reliable response. Both SDI supporters and opponents were invited to critique the 10 questions to assure objectivity and balance. The survey form was sent to the entire membership list of the NAS in the fields of mathematics, astronomy, physics, chemistry, geophysics, engineering and applied physical and mathematical sciences.

There were 673 names on the list, and all received the survey by mail in September 1986. Those who had not responded received a second copy three weeks later, and a third copy was sent by certified mail in October. Those who had still not responded were contacted by phone a week after the third mailing. Of the 673 on the original list, 41 were removed for reasons such as death, serious illness or extended travel without receiving forwarded mail. At this point, 632 scientists remained on the list and 469, or 74 percent, returned completed survey forms. This is a very high response rate for a survey of this kind.

Thumbs down: The results showed an overwhelming lack of confidence that SDI can achieve its goal of "rendering nuclear weapons impotent and obsolete" within the next 25 years. When asked what percentage of attacking warheads would have to be de-

stroyed in order to effectively defend the U.S. civilian population, 74 percent of the scientists said that more than 99 percent of the warheads would have to be destroyed. Another question asked what percentage of warheads an SDI system that could be built within the next 25 years could reasonably be expected to destroy if the Soviets proceed with modernization of their arsenal and countermeasures to SDI. In response, only four scientists, or less than 1 percent of respondents, thought that SDI could be expected to destroy in excess of 99 percent of



the attacking warheads. Even if the Soviets did not modernize or deploy any countermeasures at all, only 10 scientists, or just over 2 percent of those responding, thought that SDI could achieve the required 99 percent effectiveness within 25 years.

In recent weeks the Soviets have reiterated their position that, if current diplomacy fails and SDI deployment proceeds, they will institute a comprehensive package of SDI countermeasures. Seventy-nine percent of the scientists described themselves as opposed or strongly opposed to SDI research, and only 10 percent said that they supported or strongly supported that research. Eighty-two percent favor substantial cuts in SDI spending.

NAS members were invited to comment on SDI. One scientist said, "I believe the principle utility of SDI would be to enhance our first-strike capability. This would be highly destabilizing and would decrease our national security. It would lead to a military race in outer space which would be very difficult to police and inspect, with unlimited cost escalation."

Other scientists called SDI "pure fantasy," "an unprecedented hoax," "a fairy tale," "a chimera: pie in the sky to calm fears of the masses," "scientific fraud," "technological nuttiness," "preposterous," "a national and world tragedy," "a pipe dream," "a huge funding rat hole which could drive the country bankrupt" and "pernicious nonsense."

It now seems clear that American scientists have overwhelmingly concluded that SDI cannot possibly accomplish the lofty goals Ronald Reagan set for it. Despite this rebuff, the President remains a true believer, and Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger's Pentagon has decided to forge ahead with the program. The SDIO has adopted tactics of subterfuge and evasion in order to fund and carry out their research objectives despite the scientific community's intense opposition.

Surprise, surprise: Some scientists who have signed agreements with less-controversial military agencies have been shocked to discover that their funding source has been shifted without their knowledge or permission to the SDIO. At the University of Washington, Larry Snyder, a professor in the computer science department, accepted a grant for the study of parallel computing from the Office of Naval Research. Later he learned to his dismay that SDIO had taken over the grant without telling him.

Similar incidents have led to controversy at Boston College and Princeton, according to the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. Some of the scientists involved had signed the pledge to refuse Star Wars research money

and faced the prospect of serious damage to their ongoing projects if they objected to the switch.

SDIO-IST has also sent out press releases listing various prestigious universities as being members of a research consortium doing work on SDI. MIT was among the universities listed. MIT President Paul E. Gray said that only a few individual MIT professors were involved, and accused the SDIO of a "manipulative effort to garner implicit institutional endorsement" of SDI.

Caltech was also listed as a member, but that school's officials reported that only a single Caltech faculty member was involved, and that he had obtained his funding through the University of Dayton. Caltech President Marvin Goldberger was worried about the lure of SDI funding. "The infusion of such a large amount of money can distort activities within the university. It can draw people into research areas they might not otherwise pursue," Goldberger said.

Classified military research was extremely controversial during the Vietnam War, and many universities banned secret Pentagon projects on campus at that time. In order to carry out its research objectives, the Pentagon has assisted several schools in setting up off-campus research institutes exempt from such restrictions. This enables the military to have the best of both worlds—affiliation with prestigious universities and access to their elite faculties, and also the ability to conduct controversial and classified military research off-campus, in an environment more insulated from protest.

At this time, SDIO-IST funded projects are not classified, but researchers are being urged to obtain security clearances, and have been warned that publication of some of their findings may be restricted. Many scientists feel that classification of SDIO-IST research is just around the corner. Other

Results of a recent poll of the National Academy of Scientists showed an overwhelming lack of confidence that the Strategic Defense Initiative—Star Wars—can achieve its goal of "rendering nuclear weapons impotent and obsolete" within the next 25 years.

branches of SDIO are, of course, funding classified research by aerospace corporations and government laboratories.

The original model for such university-affiliated research institutes is the University of California's management of the nation's two nuclear weapons development laboratories, Livermore and Los Alamos. These two labs carry on much of the most advanced SDI research today. The Lincoln Laboratories, affiliated with MIT, receive some \$230 million per year in Pentagon dollars, about a quarter of which is devoted to SDI research. Other examples include the Georgia Tech Research Company, where classified military research is permitted on the campus, the Applied Research Lab at

Johns Hopkins and the Stanford Research Institute, which is no longer officially affiliated with Stanford University.

At Carnegie-Mellon University, \$100 million of Air Force funding is being spent to establish the Software Engineering Institute, which intends to develop new ways to write complex computer programs. Although direct SDI involvement has not been proven, the problem of complex computer software is one of the main challenges that SDI faces, and Carnegie-Mellon is listed as a member of the SDIO-IST consortium on optical computing. The River City Non-Violent Resistance Campaign charges that the software tools for a nuclear first-strike capability are being developed at Carnegie-Mellon.

Behind closed doors: At Northwestern University, the Department of Energy is funding the establishment of the Basic Industry Research Laboratory (BIRL) in an off-campus research park, which will do classified military research, even though such research is forbidden on campus. The facility is jointly owned by the university and the city of Evanston, Ill. A grassroots community group called Park Watch is organizing opposition to BIRL in Evanston, and Northwestern President Arnold Weber is feeling the heat.

After issuing a statement saying that no "munitions" research would be done at BIRL, Weber said in a recent letter to U.S. Rep. Sidney Yates (D-IL) that two prominent peace groups "view with approval our research park project." In fact, the two groups—the Policy Committee of the Friends Committee on National Legislation and the North Suburban Peace Initiative—had simply indicated their support for a policy that would keep weapons research out of BIRL, but clearly did not endorse the research park. Weber was embarrassed when the two groups issued statements protesting the misrepresentation of their positions.

Activists with Park Watch point out that several of the BIRL research objectives have clear applicability to SDI and other high technology weapons programs, and are calling on both Northwestern University and Evanston to issue a clear ban on classified military-weapons-related research and development at the park. Park Watch has discovered that attorneys for the research park have concluded that, despite the fact that the city owns 50 percent of the facility, it is not a public body, and is therefore not subject to the open meetings requirements of Illinois state law. Consequently, policy about what sort of research will be allowed at BIRL is being made in secret, outside of the normal review procedures of either the university or city government.

University President Weber contends that it is enough to have a policy forbidding work on "munitions," and rules out a ban on classified military research in general or SDI research in particular. Weber claims that not all military or SDI research is related to munitions, and points out that the SDI program is already funding "non-classified, non-munitions research" at Northwestern, which "offers so much benefit to the people of this region and the nation." As an example, Weber points out the work of Dr. Leonard Cerullo, whose work "promises to revolutionize brain surgery."

And what is Cerullo's research tool? It is the free electron laser. □

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By Salim Muwakkil

CHICAGO

SINCE HAROLD WASHINGTON'S VICTORY in this city's 1983 mayoral election, the black-owned *Chicago Defender* has become required reading for pundits seeking a better understanding of the mayor's core constituency. Before then may white Chicagoans had never heard of the 82-year-old black publication. The *Defender* is black Chicago's newspaper of record and one of only three black dailies in the U.S.—the others are the *New York Daily Challenge* and the *Atlanta Daily World*.

This racially defined separateness, a *de facto* cultural apartheid, has come under close scrutiny by social analysts seeking reasons for the current increases in racial polarization. But during this period of tightening racial tensions, the *Defender* has gained both revenue and influence, and the venerable newspaper is not alone. The city's 11 other black newspapers have all reported some increases in circulation and advertising revenue.

In fact, black publications across the country are experiencing a spurt in growth and profitability. The improving status of the black media may be associated with political success, as seems to be the case in Washington's Chicago. Yet most observers cite other reasons.

"In a way, you can calibrate the health of the black press by a simple formula," said Donald Mosby, a radio commentator and former *Defender* crime reporter. "The strength of the black media is inversely proportionate to black people's access to mainstream society." Using Mosby's formula, the black press' fortunes are rising as U.S. race relations decline.

Not just racism: The growth of the black press during the Reagan era would seem to confirm this argument. But according to a researcher who in 1985 completed a study on the black press, things are not that simple. "The premise that the black press exists today merely as a reaction to racism is faulty," said James Tinney, the study's author and professor of journalism at Howard University in Washington, D.C. "The health or sickness of the black press does not depend on the nature of race relations," he added. "There are other, more parochial factors that are more important."

Those factors may be more important these days, but in 1827 the first paper published by African-Americans, *Freedom's Journal*, was designed specifically to counter racist and pro-slavery viewpoints that were common fare in the mainstream press. Most of the black publications that followed were dedicated to that anti-racist mission. In the antebellum period, these periodicals focused on the abolition of slavery, and after the Civil War an explosion of new publications argued aggressively against the injuries and indignities blacks continued to suffer at the hands of racist whites.

For example, the *Defender's* original publisher, Robert Abbott, chose in 1905 a name that was literally descriptive of what he considered his publication's duty: to defend black people from the violent racism that characterized the era. In the early 1900s, African-Americans were being lynched at a rate of about 85 a year.

Dueling trends: Tinney found that there are about 320 black-owned, black-oriented publications in the U.S., the largest number ever. The category "black-oriented" is added to distinguish those few publications like the *Oakland Tribune* that are black-owned but

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America's black press survives in Reagan era

not black-oriented. The Howard University study noted that the black press has been on a gradual upswing since 1980 and, its author told *In These Times*, "is today more vibrant than it's been at many other times in its history." Tinney's prognosis is as upbeat as is his diagnosis, but neither assessment is widely shared.

"After flourishing for decades despite segregation, economic depression and virulent bigotry, America's black press now is ailing—a victim, in many ways, of its own success," wrote Mark Fitzgerald in the August 30, 1986, edition of *Editor & Publisher*. Fitzgerald reported on concerns voiced during the 11th annual convention of the National Association of Black Journalists held earlier that month.

"Black newspapers were once the only news medium—and virtually the only effective protest voice—blacks had in this country," Fitzgerald wrote, after attending various seminars and workshops at the convention on the state of the black press. "Now, however," he continued, "black-oriented newspapers are losing readers, journalists and advertisers to 'white' newspapers..." and "if the downward spiral of the black press continues, blacks—and the nation—risk the loss altogether of a vital news medium."

Americanization and you: The process of assimilation, a social dynamic that has decimated many white ethnic newspapers, has some bearing on Fitzgerald's gloomy forecast. Just as middle-class Polish-Americans find little of interest in the *Polish Daily Zgoda*, a Polish-language, Chicago-based publication, upwardly mobile blacks increasingly look beyond media with parochial, racial concerns.

The publisher of the black-owned *Houston Defender* told Fitzgerald, "Black people don't read the black newspapers [because], pri-

marily what they remember is the rage—the crime and violence. We have lost readership and we must be more creative" to regain it.

Tinney said the black press is fundamentally different from the white ethnic press

MEDIA

and thus the Americanization process that so effectively transformed hyphenated Europeans has not done the same for African-Americans.

"In real terms, black people are no more assimilated into American society than we were 50 years ago," Tinney said. For one thing, he added, ethnic identity is not the same as racial identity. And for another, most ethnic newspapers were established because of various language barriers. That isn't the case for the black press. "Blacks and whites still lead separate social lives in this

"The strength of the black media is inversely proportionate to black people's access to mainstream society."

gration at the school or workplace, I don't think it'll ever change."

Fitzgerald found some support for Tinney's views. Fitzgerald wrote that there is a chance the black press will change and survive. "For one thing, the urge to start their own newspaper still stirs in many journalists. And many of these black journalists have moved to the black press after disappointing experiences with the metro dailies."

Since black newspapers have often served as a free farm system for white publications looking for black journalists, this develop-

ment amounts to a sort of reverse migration. What's more, the addition of well-trained black professionals to the staffs of black publications would help alleviate one of the major problems plaguing the black press: poor quality. Resource-starved black publications suffer inordinately from basic journalistic flaws. Typographical errors are common and many papers fill pages with public-relations fluff. Most black publications hold editorial views that are identified with liberal Democrats, but many are unsophisticated in their political understanding. Young blood and educated minds would go a long way to jolt the stagnant thinking that has taken root in many publications.

Struggle ahead: But even the most optimistic observers see struggle on the horizon. Steve G. Davis, executive director of the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA), the organization that represents most of the country's black publications, said black publications must confront enormous economic problems. "We continue to face the difficulty of convincing advertisers that our audience is valuable," Davis said. "And with the increasing importance to our existence of the advertising dollar, it becomes all the more crucial that we are convincing."

But while black publications seek to attract the interest of "upscale" advertisers, they remain the sole advocates for a segment of the black community traditionally shunned as "downscale."

In addition to its other image problems, the black press also has been criticized for its reliance on so-called "vice ads," like those for cigarettes and alcohol. But since advertisers for those products are the black press' most consistent customers, this criticism may be misdirected.

"Black publications get about one-half of 1 percent of all ad dollars," which, Davis said, "is definitely not proportionate with our presence in this country. What is most vexing, he added, "is the reluctance of black ad agencies to target money for the black press." He said most ad agencies have a narrow attitude about black publications that his group is trying hard to change. "We've made some improvements in recent years, but not nearly enough."

Lacking demographic appeal, these publications have resorted to other methods to attract ad money. The NNPA has created an advertising committee, consisting of publishers from certain publications, that meets with top executive personnel of the various corporations from which they seek advertising. "We don't meet with the advertising people," Davis explained. "We go straight to the top and offer them with a modern presentation on the power of the black consumer market. We show them how they can gain economic benefits from advertising through the black press and we hint how they could lose money if they don't."

This hint of a boycott threat is a tactic similar to that being used by some civil rights groups to win "economic covenants" with several corporations. It's a tactic that also has been successful for the NNPA. Recent agreements with the Chrysler Corp., Adolph Coors Co., McDonalds, K-Mart, Anheuser-Busch and Heublein, Inc., have pumped new revenue into black publications across the country.

"We do whatever we can to ensure our survival," Davis said. "We realize that optimism for us has too often meant pessimism about race relations in America. We're hoping to balance that inverse relationship as soon as possible." □

By William Robinson

TEGUCIGALPA, HONDURAS

This story and the report on page 11 offer a unique look at the U.S.-backed contra operation. The article below focuses on southern Honduras, where the main contra group—the Nicaraguan Democratic Force—is becoming an increasingly disruptive and unwanted guest. The report on page 11 was written just a few miles away, on the Nicaraguan side of the border, where the contras' latest war efforts have been mostly ineffective, despite millions of dollars in U.S. aid.

WHEN THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION first organized the Nicaraguan counterrevolutionaries here, Hondurans were told that U.S. dollars would pour into the country and Nicaragua would soon be "liberated."

Now, after nearly six years of the contras' military occupation, their continued presence threatens to spur massive social and political unrest. "The contras have brought us nothing but crime, terror, corruption, deepening socio-economic problems and the threat of war with Nicaragua," says former Labor Minister Gautama Fonseta, a newspaper columnist. "Our patience has expired, their time is up and the government is headed for a crisis if the problem isn't resolved soon."

The anti-contra clamor is the number-one national issue in Honduras. It splashes over the country's newspapers, is the talk of any coffee shop and is the increasing focus of protest throughout the country.

On March 5 at least 20,000 people marched through the streets of Tegucigalpa, demanding the expulsion of the contras from Honduras. The demonstration was unprecedented in its size and militancy. At the same time, a revolutionary organization set off a bomb in the offices of the Nicaraguan Democratic Force (FDN), the principal contra group, which is based in Honduras.

When the CIA first began organizing the scattered remnants of the defeated Somocista National Guard into the FDN in 1981, the principal contra group had a firm base of support in Honduras.

But the dim prospects of a contra victory in Nicaragua, the threat to Honduras' internal stability and the uncertainty of U.S. policy toward Central America in the wake of the Iran/contra scandal has virtually undermined the Honduran support base the rebels had cultivated. Opposition is no longer limited to those the government could brand as "Sandinista sympathizers." Members of the country's business community, professionals, politicians and even sectors of the military are joining with trade unions, peasants and mass organizations to oppose the contras. These developments created a new and unexpected dilemma that further tarnishes President Reagan's tattered policy in the region.

Troubles begin: In the contras' heyday of 1983-84, the majority of their some 12,000 troops operated within Nicaragua, crossing the border only to regroup, re-supply and then return. But by 1985 that pattern was reversing. The Sandinistas had gained the military momentum, and in stunning victories over the contras throughout that year the rebels were dislodged from large tracts of the Nicaraguan countryside. The bulk of their forces were pushed across into southern Honduras, where they set themselves up as a foreign occupation force in the border

Contras overstay welcome in Honduran countryside

province of El Paraiso. It was then that the problems really began for Honduras.

Those hardest hit are the *campesinos* from El Paraiso, one of the most fertile regions in the country and a major producer of coffee—Honduras' principal foreign exchange earner—as well as cattle and basic grain.

New Nicaragua: At least 36 villages were completely abandoned and taken over by the contras in 1986, in a vast zone which was baptized "New Nicaragua." Last month representatives of the FDN here claimed

CENTRAL AMERICA

their forces were clearing out of Honduras and initiating a new offensive against the Sandinistas. *Campesinos* from El Paraiso, however, disputed the claim, charging that the contras were in fact moving deeper into Honduran territory, and had occupied 12 new villages.

According to Mauricio Hernandez, director of the Honduran Association of Coffee Growers (AHPROCAFE), more than 7,000 coffee farmers and their families have fled their lands in El Paraiso. Other sources report that some 40,000 Hondurans in all have become internal refugees, or *desplazados* (displaced persons).

"In addition, many have not left their land, but productive activities have been severely affected," Hernandez says. "The climate of terror in the zone has disrupted transportation, marketing networks and social infrastructure."

"The contras are no longer a profitable business...no one wants to stick with the losers."

The 1987 coffee harvest is the third in a row that has been affected. Hernandez estimates economic losses from coffee alone to approach some \$10 million, although he says that accurate figures are difficult to ascertain since the Honduran army has prohibited free movement in the zone.

AHPROCAFE and a new group called the Committee of Displaced Persons resolved in a special joint assembly last November to demand that the government expel the contras from Honduras and assist those displaced. The groups are also demanding compensation for damages from the U.S. government.

"It's quite clear who is responsible," says Hernandez, "the contras and the Reagan administration."

While staff members from AHPROCAFE headquarters in Tegucigalpa and leaders of the Committee of Displaced Persons petition the government on a daily basis, the refugees in El Paraiso are talking of more militant actions—occupying a government building, starting a hunger strike, blocking the highway from Tegucigalpa to the provincial capital of Danli. Some have even proposed forming a *campesino* militia to try to oust the contras.

Trouble spreads: The problems caused by the contras are not limited to the border region. Out of control, the contras have turned to lawless bands in the countryside and in the cities. They have been blamed for assaults on banks and business establishments, as well as a wave of violent attacks against opponents of their occupation. The conservative daily Honduran newspaper *La Prensa* accused them of tossing the bomb that destroyed the paper's offices last fall after it editorialized against the contras.

One businessman from the Honduran Superior Council of Private Enterprise, has told *In These Times* that the contras have set up numerous illicit commercial establishments and the government has lost thousands of dollars in unpaid taxes. Similarly, the contras use U.S. aid to purchase huge quantities of foodstuffs and medicine, resulting in periodic shortages of basic goods for others in Honduras. The contras are also thought to have introduced venereal diseases, resistant forms of malaria and other health disorders previously unknown in Honduras.

Last fall the Federation of Honduran Students charged that the FDN mounted propaganda campaigns in the country's high schools recruiting youth through bribes and

force to join their ranks.

"Those people alternate their incursions into Nicaragua with delinquency in our country," says Honduran Congressman Nicolas Cruz Torres, one of the country's leading politicians and a member of the ruling Liberal Party. "They are modern-day versions of the pirates that sacked the Central American coast centuries ago."

Cruz Torres, a conservative, introduced a motion into the Honduran congress last October that called for the expulsion of all contras from Honduras, their relocation to the U.S. and peaceful coexistence with Nicaragua. He warned of economic disruption because of a continued contra presence and the threat of massive social unrest. Cruz Torres also warned that, should the U.S. end its support to the contras, Honduras will be left with a well-armed and uncontrollable mercenary army.

Army unrest: Many Honduran army officers are now discontent with the contra presence. Cruz Torres emphasizes that "for tactical reasons, the armed forces will not speak publicly on the issue, but this problem is fiercely debated internally." Manuel Acosta Bonilla, a former cabinet member and lawmaker, says there is a growing movement in the officers corps in support of the contras' expulsion. Says one officer, who requested anonymity: "The contras are more respected by the gringos than we are. They have better salaries, they can do what they want with impunity. Hell, we aren't getting \$100 million."

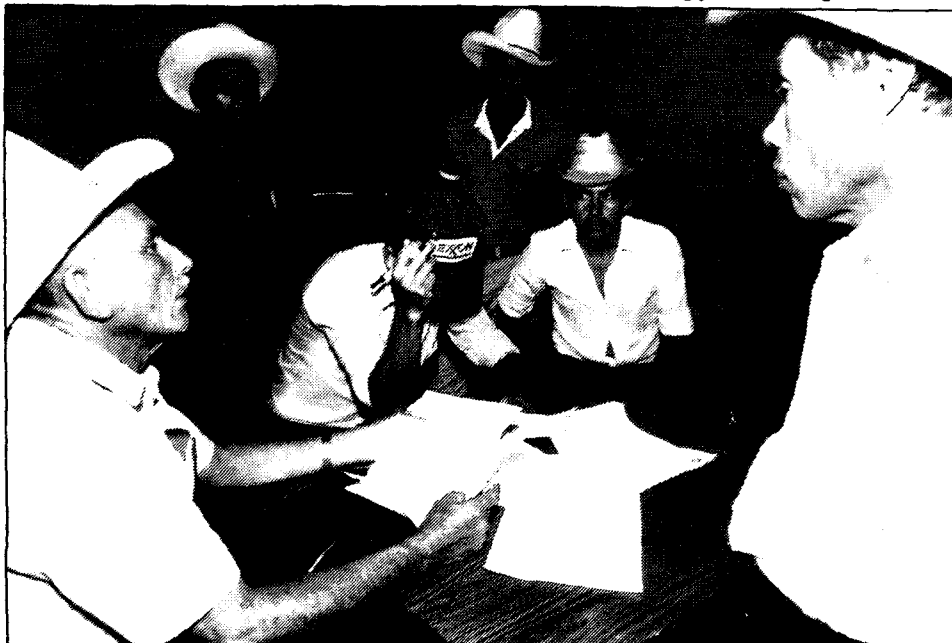
In addition, many former collaborators in the military and political parties, fearful of public implication in new contragate scandals, now want to keep their noses clean. "The contras are no longer a profitable business. They are too risky, and no one believes they can win—no one wants to stick with the losers," says Acosta Bonilla.

The administration of President Jose Azcona is caught between wanting to wash its hands of the contras and the constant U.S. pressures. "The contras are our principal foreign policy problem," Roberto Suazo Tome, in charge of Central American affairs at the Foreign Ministry, explains. "We want them out; the sooner the better. But the U.S. government keeps them here and we're not about to fight with the gringos over it."

In a more open reference to U.S. pressures, former armed forces head, Gen. Walter Lopez, ousted in a February 1986 army coup which many attributed to the U.S. embassy, charged on Honduran National Radio last February 26 that, during his tenure between 1984 and 1986 Reagan officials constantly pushed the government to cooperate with the contra war.

Former National Security Adviser Robert McFarlane "came here regularly to tell us about Honduran national security and the contras, and the role we ought to be playing.... On one occasion he got so angry that he rose from the table yelling at me: 'Look, General, you Hondurans have two options—go with the U.S. or go with the Russians.'" Lopez, who since his ouster formed the Social Democratic Party, which is actively campaigning for the contras' expulsion, concluded: "We're getting sick and tired of their telling us what to do and how to do it in our country."

William Robinson is a journalist with Agencia Nueva Nicaragua, an autonomous Managua-based news agency.



Displaced Honduran coffee growers have organized to get their land back from the contras.

©Arlene Collins

Baby M

Continued from page 3

hairbrush, but the officers snatched up the baby and fled.

The legal drama that has unfolded since then has been alternately heartbreaking and infuriating. Judge Sorkow awarded the Sterns temporary custody in a closed-door hearing in which only they were represented. He originally ordered that the trial be closed to the public, but was overturned when three newspapers appealed. He also announced early on that he would not "be mired in inquiries dealing with the ethics, morality and theology" of the surrogate-mother contract.

Meanwhile, the Sterns' attorney, Gary N. Skoloff, concentrated his fire on proving that Whitehead is unfit as a mother and that her rights should be terminated. Evidence has been entered that she is a "narcissistic personality," that she engages in

"magical thinking," that her husband once came home drunk and beat her (she claims it was only a push) and that the couple misrepresented their financial assets when filing for bankruptcy in 1983. Even police reports concerning her sister and two brothers have been entered into evidence by the Sterns' attorney.

Yet as the Whiteheads' own battery of experts have testified, she has already shown herself to be a fit and devoted parent to her two older children. "She's grieving, bereft, pushed to the wall and her coping mechanisms are very taxed," testified Phyllis R. Silverman, a professor of psychiatry at Harvard who has studied grief in women. Even her wild threats to kill herself and her child were not necessarily inappropriate considering the extraordinary circumstances in which she found herself. "One can sometimes get crazy behavior in a crazy situation," Silverman said. "...I think Mary Beth Whitehead is being crucified for

caring."

Nonetheless, while public support for Whitehead has been slow to develop, there are indications that things may be starting to turn around. Since mid-February, a small group of feminists, joined by a growing number of local housewives, have been staging weekly vigils outside the courtroom to demonstrate their support. Led by Phyllis Chesler, a psychologist and author (*Women and Madness* and *Mothers on Trial*), they include Kathleen Lahey, a law professor at the University of Windsor, Canada, and Karin Malpede, a New York playwright.

Calling the Baby M case "a brutal use of state power against one family, one woman, one mother, one child," they declared that "virtually any mother subjected to the torment and unfriendly interrogations of court-appointed and Stern-hired 'experts' could easily be presented as 'unfit.' ...If William and Elizabeth Stern believe that their relative wealth could secure worthwhile advan-

tages for baby Sara as she grows, we suggest they contribute to Sara's upbringing and education." Otherwise, the statement went on, "we reject the notion that people who make money make better parents."

The group has also gathered signatures for a statement of support from Betty Friedan, Gloria Steinem, Andrea Dworkin, Judith Rossner, Ellen Willis, Barbara Epstein, Elizabeth Hardwick, Lois Gould, Sally Quinn and Alex Kate Shulman, as well as entertainers Meryl Streep and Carly Simon.

When Elizabeth Stern chanced to stroll past their picket line recently, one woman ran across the courthouse lawn to demand: "How does it feel to take another woman's child?"

"I believe in women's rights, but that's not why I'm here," said another picketer. "I'm here because this is an issue of justice."

Daniel Lazare is a New York-based journalist who frequently contributes to *In These Times*.

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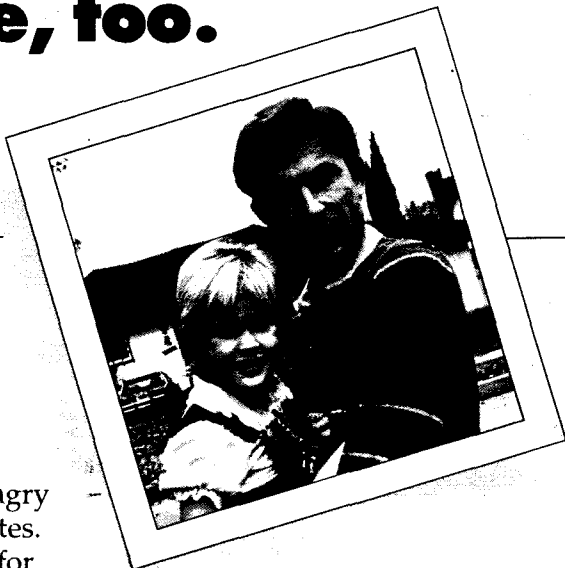
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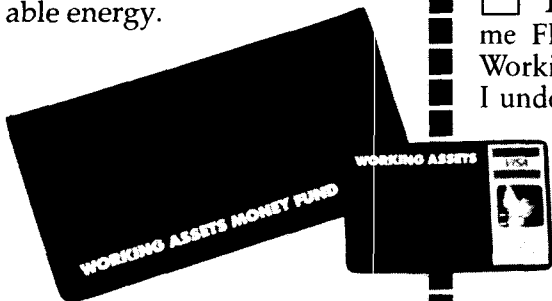
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IN THESE TIMES CUSTOMER SERVICE
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By Alan Gottlieb

OCOTAL, NICARAGUA

THE LOW-INTENSITY WAR IN THE NORTHERN mountains and central jungles of Nicaragua has escalated over the past two months, according to residents and officials of this mountainous region along the Honduran border. Contra forces, almost non-existent in this region during much of 1986, have apparently begun infiltrating through the area again.

While the contra presence causes serious difficulties, it is the side effects of the war that have, of late, brought so much pain to the northern part of Nueva Segovia province. People interviewed here this month say they feel confident that the Sandinista army can keep the contras under control. But rampant health problems and a crumbling economy are not dealt with so easily.

An epidemic: Since November of last year at least 300 people in this city of 24,000 have contracted typhoid. Six have died; scores more are still seriously ill. Health care officials and doctors have traced the problem to Ocotol's notoriously contaminated water supply.

David Rivera, director of Ocotol's Modesta Agurcia Moncada Hospital, says he believes the typhoid epidemic can be attributed to

NICARAGUA

germ warfare by the contras. "It seems very strange to us that people in this region have been drinking the water for years, and until recently we had never seen a case of typhoid," he says. "To be sure, we've had plenty of other health problems related to the water, but never typhoid before."

Since the river from which Ocotol's water comes originates in southern Honduras, in an area known to be occupied by a large number of contra troops (see story on page 9), local officials fear Rivera may be right. And they wonder what might come next.

It is problems like this, rather than the contras' actual presence, that have people in this area worried. Despite a noticeable increase in contra activity in the region this year, people throughout the area go about their daily business, betraying little concern about the military situation.

On a jeep trip from Ocotol to Teotecacinte, a hamlet 50 miles northeast of Ocotol and half a mile from the border, travelers see farmers hoeing their fields, women washing laundry in streams and children playing in the dirt. Dozens of contra bands have moved through the region in the past few weeks, occasionally clashing with government troops. But residents say this does not concern them.

"Sure they attack us sometimes, but they never leave alive," says Adilia Maraviada, a mother of five who lives in a resettlement town outside the often-attacked town of Jalapa. "Every family here has a rifle, and when we catch a contra we kill him. We don't let them go. And there are hundreds of [Sandinista] soldiers watching at every moment."

Passing through: Although the Jalapa-Teotecacinte area has been targeted by the contras in the past, it is now too heavily fortified to be attractive, local officials say. Contra troops these days seem more interested in passing through the region en route to the jungle provinces of Central Zelaya, Boaco and Chontales, farther to the south and east.

Estimates of the number of contras inside Nicaragua range from 4,000-12,000. Most have entered since early January. Officials



One of the estimated 2,000 war orphans in Ocotol, a Nicaraguan city of 24,000 near the Honduran border.

Along contra war zone, life and death go on

and observers say the contras tend to slip into the country in small bands, which join together farther to the south. The areas of heaviest combat in recent weeks have been to the east, where the mountains meet the jungle, and up to 70 miles south of the border.

"It really doesn't matter to us how many contras are inside the country," says Orlanda Picado, a high-ranking Ocotol official. "Twelve thousand contras haven't got the balls of 120 Sandinistas. They fight with their backs turned, fleeing. They might enter, but they can't do anything militarily."

The contra leadership, however, claims its troops have been inflicting heavy losses on the Popular Sandinista Army. In a communique issued March 2, the contras said they shot down a Soviet-made attack helicopter February 27 in the province of Zelaya, deep inside the country. The Sandinistas deny this report.

According to information released by the Ministry of Defense, 805 contra soldiers have been killed in the last two months. In that same period, some 150 Sandinista soldiers have died, the ministry says. Because of the irregular nature of the war, these figures cannot be independently confirmed.

But the figures released by the ministry acknowledge a significant escalation of the war over the last two months; there have been, according to official information, more than 10 battles a day during this period—more than twice the number reported at the

end of last year. Despite the apparent escalation, army spokesmen claim that the army is in total disarray. The contras, however, have continued attacking civilian and economic targets.

War orphans: The long-range impact of the war is evident throughout the country, but nowhere is it felt more strongly than in the war zone. Picado says there are 2,000 war orphans in Ocotol and more than 8,000 in the province of Nueva Segovia. In areas of Central Zelaya, under partial control of the contras, children denied access to health

"Sometimes they attack us, but they never leave alive.... When we catch a contra we kill him."

care have been dying of measles, according to missionaries who live in the area.

In Ocotol's hospital, typhoid victims and wounded soldiers share crowded wards. Medicine is in short supply and so, at times, is food. Hospital director Rivera says the Ministry of Health's budget for this year is the same as last year's. With inflation at 700 percent, this has cut deeply into services, he says.

"We're just trying to keep from sliding too far backward," he says. "But we're lacking simple things that could save lives, things

like valves for oxygen tanks and intravenous fluid."

In the war zones of Nueva Segovia, Rivera says, 70 percent to 80 percent of the children suffer some degree of malnutrition. Agricultural production has been hurt by the contras, and distribution channels in those areas are not operating effectively. Also, he says, the contras are killing and stealing large numbers of cattle.

"You see the effects most clearly in the children," Rivera says. "Many are so malnourished that a common cold becomes potentially dangerous. And we are so short of food in the hospital we have trouble restoring them to health. We can't afford to hospitalize anyone for very long."

Facing fire: Another problem in the border zone, Rivera says, is that local peasants have grown so confident about the army's ability to defend them that they have returned in large numbers to some areas that aren't necessarily safe. "As a consequence, we are seeing more civilian wounded in this area," he says.

In Teotecacinte, one peasant exhibits such confidence. Standing in front of his house, which faces the hills of Honduras just a few hundred yards away, he speaks nonchalantly about a contra base camp soldiers say is just a mile into the hills.

"They haven't shot at us for 10 days," he says with a shrug. "When they shoot, they fire 50mm anti-tank shells at us, but they hardly ever hit anyone."

Asked if the presence of the contras makes him nervous, he shrugs again and says, "When my time comes to die, I'll die." And walks toward his corn field, a few hundred feet from the border.

Alan Gottlieb is a Nicaragua-based journalist who often contributes to *In These Times*.

IN THESE TIMES MARCH 18-24, 1987 11

WHO KILLED OLOF PALME



By Diana Johnstone

STOCKHOLM

AFTER NEARLY HALF A CENTURY OF SOCIAL Democratic government, Sweden's security police remain firmly in the grip of right-wingers whose notorious hostility to the late Prime Minister Olof Palme makes them prime suspects in his unsolved murder. This fact stands out as possibly the most significant amid the debris of the botched year-long investigation of the Feb. 28, 1986, assassination of Palme, who, among Western European leaders, was the most actively committed to world peace.

The Swedish security police, known as SäPo, are responsible for investigating foreign subversion and keeping tabs on domestic security risks. By all accounts, people in SäPo "hated Palme's guts."

SäPo was supposed to protect the prime minister. But according to knowledgeable sources in Stockholm, SäPo had a file on Palme that was by no means for his protection. Many SäPo officers regarded the prime minister as a security risk who was selling out Sweden to the Soviet bloc.

In his neat apartment in Stockholm, retired SäPo officer Melker Bentler told *In These Times* that right-wing indoctrination in Swedish security police goes back to pro-German feelings in the '30s. At the end of World War II, the pro-German attitude changed to pro-Americanism. The constant factor was viewing Communism as the enemy.

SäPo depends on the CIA for information about Latin America and considers all political refugees potential "terrorists," according to Bentler, who retired in 1980 at age 65 after 27 years with SäPo. "What the CIA says is the word of God. They depend on it 200 percent," he said.

The security police also depend heavily on the West German BND and the Israeli Mossad. During the colonels' dictatorship in Greece, SäPo passed along information on Greek political exiles to the Greek junta's police via the secret services of NATO allies, Bentler recalled.

And although the Swedish Social Democratic government helped the Mozambique liberation movement FRELIMO that led the country to independence from Portuguese colonialism, SäPo regarded FRELIMO as terrorists, he added.

Bentler also said that it was hard to believe that 45 percent of Swedes are Social Democrats, since he had never met any in SäPo. He became isolated as a maverick in the service after his 1978 complaints about illegal wire-tapping became public.

Several years ago, on the occasion of another assassination, Bentler recalled hearing colleagues say they wished someone would do the same to that devil Palme. When Palme was assassinated, Bentler said, his first thought was that it must be some extreme conservative group with help from SäPo.

Hatred of Palme was shared by several

military officers, especially naval officers. Palme was skeptical of the very existence of the "Russian submarine threat," dear to Swedish naval officers in their battle to wrest appropriations from parliament.

Suspicion of Palme within SäPo and the armed forces was fed in the Reagan years from such international networks as the World Anti-Communist League and the Rev. Sun Myung Moon's CAUSA, with their military and intelligence agency connections and support from the White House.

Unofficial Reagan administration spokesmen such as strategist Edward Luttwak publicly suggested that Palme was "manipulated by the Russians." In a November 1984 interview with the Danish business magazine *Management*, Luttwak predicted Sweden would let Soviet forces cross Swedish territory to invade Denmark and said if he were a Dane he would consider Olof Palme more dangerous than the Russians.

When Palme was murdered, the investigation was taken over by Stockholm Police Chief Hans Holmer. This was not usual procedure, but then neither was the assassination of a Swedish prime minister. Police often seem to have been rattled by the enormity of it all.

Among the various police agencies working on the Palme murder, special contribution was the "Kurdish track." This is the wild goose chase that mobilized police throughout the crucial first year of the investigation.

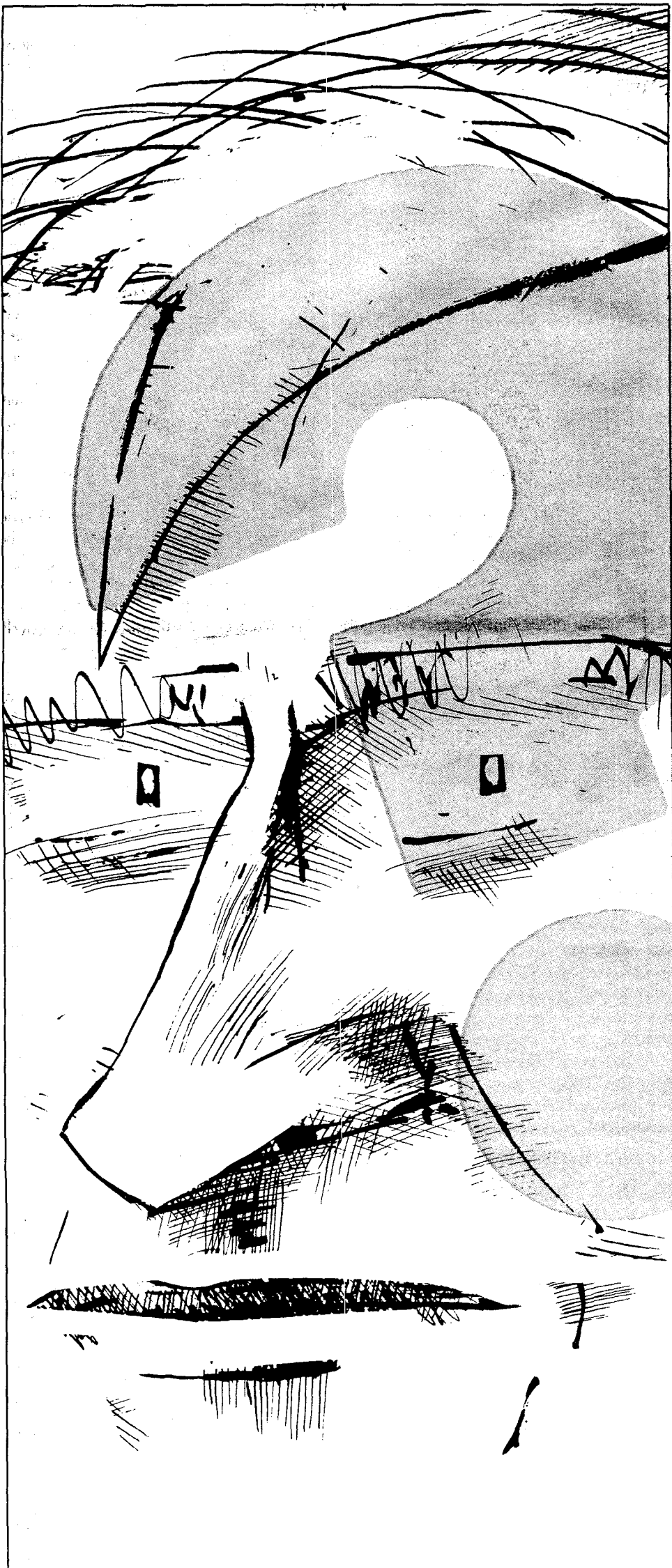
Now a year has passed, snows have melted and fallen again, tracks are covered and memories are blurred. Statistically, only a 10 percent chance remains of solving the case. And this depends mainly on voluntary testimony by someone inside the conspiracy—if there was a conspiracy.

On the wrong track: Holmer has been forced to abandon both the investigation and the special "Palme room" in Stockholm police headquarters where he had coordinated investigations by federal, state and local police forces. His frequent appearances at press conferences, optimistically claiming to be "on the track" of the killers, made him a popular figure here—"Sweden's man of the year," according to Swedish TV.

Holmer projected the image of the tough cop opposing stodgy bureaucrats. In fact, observers note that Holmer was an administrator with no experience as a crime investigator. He was a Social Democrat, and for a while in the '70s had been put in charge of SäPo in one of the Social Democrats' vain attempts to get political control of the security police. By all accounts he was a figurehead.

The police bungled the investigation from the start. Of the two bullets fired by the assassin, one was found six hours later, the other 36 hours later—both by passers-by, not the police.

One suspect, an eccentric 33-year-old rightist who had been associated with Lyndon LaRouche's anti-Palme campaign in Sweden, was arrested last March 17 after wit-



nesses reported seeing him hanging around the neighborhood on the night of the murder. He was released two days later after police made the blunder of showing his photo to a witness about to identify him in a line-up.

From then on, Holmer seems to have clutched more and more stubbornly to the "Kurdish track," which SäPo offered on the basis of its years of surveillance of a small group of Kurdish political refugees from Turkey associated with the Marxist-Leninist Workers Party of Kurdistan, or PKK. SäPo has long considered PKK supporters dangerous terrorists. Twice—in June 1984 and again in November 1985—a Kurd was murdered in public by another Kurd. Vengeance against "traitors" to some obscure cause seemed to be the motive. This rude behavior gave the Kurds a bad image in Sweden. If these least welcome of the "black heads"—the term for dark foreign immigrants—turned out to be guilty of killing Palme, the news would be comforting to Swedish self-righteousness. And as the Kurds have no state of their own, no government would be offended.

SäPo had been trying to get the suspected Kurdish "terrorists" expelled from Sweden.

SäPo, Sweden's security police, are firmly in the grip of right-wingers whose notorious hostility to the late Prime Minister Olof Palme makes them prime suspects in his unsolved murder. By all accounts, people in SäPo "hated Palme's guts."

In the summer of 1985 conservative Swedish newspapers had even published stories leaked from SäPo saying that Kurdish terrorists were threatening to kill Palme. So when Palme was assassinated, SäPo already had a potential suspect and files full of information on the Kurds collected from years of wiretaps and surveillance. This set the stage for a frameup that seems to have been averted only by the Swedish judicial system's safeguards of the rights of defendants—even Kurds.

Last December Holmer claimed to be "95 percent sure" of his "main track." But when judicial authorities forced him to produce evidence, he was unable to do so. The Kurdish track collapsed, Holmer was relieved of his responsibility for the investigation and all of the "173 hypotheses" he claimed to have examined were back on equal footing.

Aside from the absence of any direct evidence, the Kurdish track always suffered from a blatant flaw: the absence of a motive. To conservatives it may seem sufficient that the Kurds "are violent"—they are likely to have committed the assassination because that is the sort of thing they do. But to any

politically sophisticated observer, it makes no sense to suspect a Marxist-Leninist group, seeking support for safe political exile in Sweden, of murdering the one leader most sympathetic to Third World causes in the entire Western world.

Pinpointing a motive: Wilhelm Agrell, of the Lund University Peace and Conflict Research Institute, has examined the case on the premise that one can seek a solution from two directions: from technical examination of material evidence and from intellectual analysis of motivation. In an article in Sweden's biggest newspaper, the *Dagens Nyheter*, Agrell recently complained that there had been no systematic study of the "motive line," and then offered one of his own.

When the Kurdish track came up, Agrell told *In These Times*, attempts to establish a motive were dropped in an effort to "find evidence" against the Kurds. Newspapers used material leaked by SäPo to write articles against "dangerous Kurds." Evidence that pointed in other directions was neglected by Holmer and not reported in the media.

Agrell said that after examining international and national motives, he ruled out terrorism as a motive because the murder seemed to be a liquidation. In international terms, the motivation of governments Palme had criticized, such as South Africa and Chile, was not convincing. Yet Agrell said Palme's "enormous unofficial contacts" should still be studied, since he was involved in a lot of things never made public that might provide clues to motivation.

Agrell said he prefers the "national" motive line, however. What made Palme personally controversial in Sweden, Agrell said, was the security policy aspect: the "submarine question" and relations with the Soviet Union. Thus Agrell arrived at what he called the "fatherland" or "patriotic" motive: Palme was assassinated by a group of men in the armed forces and/or security police who believed that by so doing they were saving Sweden from being delivered to the Russians.

Several persons were seen in the vicinity of the crime with walkie-talkies, according to Agrell, and police vehicles were observed nearby that should not have been there. The strange thing, said Agrell, is that the police investigation was not eager to delve into these clues that pointed toward a coordinated, professional plot.

Information on suspected police involvement was available to the Swedish press since last spring, Agrell said, but was not used because editors didn't know what to do with it. Thus journalists were aware of things the public did not know.

In his *Dagens Nyheter* article, Agrell referred to the "oft-cited and oft-denied qualification of Palme as a security risk" by former SäPo chief Per-Gunnar Vinges. Agrell says the best confirmation of his theory is the letter by Vinges that *Dagens Nyheter* printed after his piece ran. In it Vinges denied again that he said that about Palme, but agreed with Agrell's general analysis.

Important to the "patriotic motive," said Agrell, is the timing. Palme was killed a little more than a month before a scheduled state visit to Moscow in early April 1986. Palme had stressed the visit as an important foreign policy move. He intended to end the Swedish-Soviet dispute over Soviet submarine incursions in Swedish waters (see accompanying story). Strong resistance from right-wing parties had forced Palme to postpone the visit several times. Press op-

Continued on page 16

Sweden's underwater flying saucers

Every summer brings its quota of Russian submarine sightings in Sweden's peaceful fjords. Sometimes it's a shadow in the depths or a periscope amid the gliding swans. Soviet submarines are Sweden's underwater flying saucers: glimpsed but never caught.

To most people, their elusiveness is proof of their advanced technology and sly intent. To a few, it means they don't exist.

The subject elicits from retired security police Commissioner Melker Bentler (see accompanying story) a skeptical laugh. Russian submarines are "the Swedish equivalent of the Loch Ness monster," he says.

A 1985 book by Ingmar Myhrberg and a prize-winning 95-minute documentary film by Maj. Wechseltmann argue that the Soviet submarine scare is a farce put on by the Swedish navy. This is much too disrespectful a position to be believed by many Swedes.

One Soviet submarine did unquestionably invade Swedish waters. On Nov. 29, 1981, a Soviet U-137 submarine of the "Whiskey" type ran aground in a heavy fog on the southern coast of Sweden. The Russian crew claimed to have gone astray due to a failure of navigational equipment. Swedish military authorities said the Whiskey was a spy ship.

Wechseltmann's film shows that the "spy" sub attracted the attention of local people for miles around with its loud diesel engine that sounded "in trouble" to a marine journalist with an experienced ear. The first Swedish naval officer who saw it took it for a Swedish sub on its way to the scrap heap. The Whiskey is a Russian copy of a 1945 German U-boat, type 21, long since considered totally obsolete by Western navies. But the Russians have a habit of not throwing old military equipment away.

Interviewed by Wechseltmann, Professor Ulrich Gabler of Lubeck—the German designer of more than 100 submarines, including type 21 and half the conventional submarines in the West—called the Whiskey "most unsuitable" for snooping in fjords since it is too high to submerge in the shallow waters and cannot turn around in the narrows. British Adm. Ian McGeoch, a commander of NATO subs in the Eastern Atlantic and editor of *The Naval Review*, said it was "unlikely in the extreme" that the sub was on a spying mission.

The Whiskey could get only dance music on its damaged radio aerial direction finder. The magnetic compass was almost impossible to read because the glass was yellow with age and covered with years of scratches. The Russians said they got lost because their gyro compass didn't work. The Swedes could not verify this because when they came aboard the Russians had taken the gyro compass apart, ostensibly to see what was wrong. The Swedish navy concluded that the

submarine had been caught on a spying mission.

This incident, known as "Whiskey on the rocks," was very damaging to Swedish-Soviet relations.

A year later, in October 1982, the Swedish media, with prodding from the navy, embarked on the great Russian submarine hunt. After presumed submarine sightings in the narrow fjord of Harsfjärden 350 journalists were herded into a press room for a fortnight at the Berga naval base to cover the chase. With nothing to do and nothing to see except Swedish naval vessels and helicopters circling dramatically above the "trapped Soviet submarine," reporters let their imaginations do the work.

Banner headlines announced: "Sub will be netted here"; "Prison camp for crew" "He (with photo) will interrogate Russian sub crew"; "Give up or blow up." Some fancied the plight of the trapped Russians: "A hell below." And best of all, with a vivid drawing of anguished men: "Crew can be driven to suicide."

"Captured!" yelled one tabloid.

But it wasn't.

What happened? How did the utterly trapped submarine, or submarines, escape? How, incidentally, did it stay underwater for 12 days, something Professor Gabler categorically calls impossible for a submarine small enough for such shallow waters? Submersion time for a "mini-sub," such as the Russians were thought to be creeping about in, is 12 hours. After that, it must surface to recharge batteries and oxygen.

However that may be, public alarm at the Russian U-boat invasion enabled naval officers who had been complaining of cutbacks in their equipment to get more money from parliament. The failure to catch a real sub, even with a camera, gave rise to two sorts of rumors. Disrespectful persons like Wechseltmann think the navy lied. On the other hand, according to informed observers, there were rumors in naval circles that "we were forced to let a sub go that was caught because Olof Palme didn't want diplomatic repercussions."

Maj. Wechseltmann is sure that Palme didn't believe the submarine incursion stories. "He knew the Russians and the Swedish military too well," she told *In These Times*. Palme had begun his career in military intelligence and was certainly harder to fool than many other political leaders.

Yet it would be politically impossible for any Swedish leader to publicly contradict the official military version. Palme was planning to settle the troublesome submarine dispute, which had poisoned Soviet-Swedish relations, in talks with Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachov during his planned state visit to Moscow in April 1986. What solution he had in mind remains part of the Palme mystery. —D.J.

EDITORIAL

IN THESE TIMES

"...with liberty and justice for all"

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Sun sets on Reagan's fondest dream

Last week, as the ship was sinking, Arturo Cruz got off. This symbolic blow to Ronald Reagan's passionate obsession was followed the next day by a 230-196 vote in the House of Representatives to delay sending the remaining \$40 million of \$105 million in aid to the contras for six months.

This, too, was a symbolic act—even if the Senate joins the House on this bill, the president's veto of it won't be overridden. But it was also a clear signal that the jig is up. Ronald Reagan came to office promising to bring back the glory days of empire. But at least for him and his neo-conservative clique, this script does not have a happy ending. Reagan can play at being Teddy Roosevelt, but unlike T.R., Reagan has a big mouth but a small stick.

Administration fury over their inability to crush what they see as a small band of impoverished Nicaraguans comes from frustration at being unable to do what past administrations did openly in the teens and '20s, and covertly in the post-World War II years. Calvin Coolidge, in 1927, was also accused of conducting a "private war" in Nicaragua in support then of an unpopular puppet regime.

Like Reagan, Coolidge insisted that we were "not making war on Nicaragua any more than a policeman on the street is making war on passers-by." We were simply keeping order in our back yard.

And then, too, the Coolidge administration accused Mexico of acting as the Soviet Union's "catpaw" in Nicaragua. "The Bolshevik leaders," Secretary of State Frank B. Kellogg told Congress, "have had very definite ideas with respect to the role that Mexico and Latin America are to play in their general program of world revolution." Their plan, Kellogg argued, was to use Mexico and Nicaragua "as a base for activity against the United States."

Like Reagan, however, Kellogg presented no evidence to back up his claim, so a Congress then more independent and less intimidated by official anti-Communism refused to support administration policy. This didn't faze Coolidge, who sent his own emissary, former Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson, backed up by 2,500 Marines, to Nicaragua to "clean up that mess"—which, of course, Stimson did.

The bad news: All of this took place when Ronald Reagan was already in his late teens. But how things have changed, both for better and for worse. Those pesky little Latinos are no longer so easy to push around, supported as they are by a world-wide upsurge of

movements for self-determination and independence. And the American people are no longer as unconcerned about other peoples' sovereignty or as blindly supportive of overseas military intervention.

For us, though not for the administration, that's the good side. The bad side is that leaders of both major parties and a majority of Congress now share Coolidge and Reagan's Cold War views. That's what makes the vote against contra aid something less than we would like it to be.

There are some members of Congress whose opposition to contra aid is based on the principle that Nicaragua, like all Third World nations, has the right to determine its own fate, even if that's not good for General Motors. But most share the view of *New York Times* editor A.M. Rosenthal, who wrote recently that if the contras could clean up their act, "unite militarily, choose a coherent political leadership and become strong enough either to fight effectively or negotiate effectively," then it would be OK for us to overthrow the Sandinista regime.

During the House debate on last week's bill to postpone contra aid, leading Democrats used narrow, technical arguments in support of their positions. "It is wrong in our democratic country for our president to begin his war for democracy by keeping it a secret from the American people," said Rep. Richard A. Gephardt (D-MO), a presidential candidate. And Rep. David E. Bonior (D-MI), who managed the debate for the Democrats, insisted that "the full extent of corruption in the contra program" had to be exposed "before we can consider sending another dime to the contras."

More of the same: Given that some 62 percent of the American people oppose contra aid, these statements hardly reflect strong principled opposition. Whether or not the level of corruption in the contra program is exposed, the American people are likely now to remain strongly opposed to further aid. So the contras are a lost cause.

But what about a future Democratic administration? Clearly, we can't assume that the Democratic leadership, anymore than the Republican, would refrain from covert or overt intervention in the internal affairs of Third World nations, even though that rhetorical principle is mouthed by both parties.

LETTERS

Auto system

YOUR EDITORIAL (FEB. 18) ON HIGHWAY SPEED-limits was a conspicuous letdown. It's one thing to be in touch with mainstream debates and even to make a rhetorical point about some minor matter of agreement with the Reagan administration. But after pointing out the hypocrisy of existing highway laws, instead of confronting the irrationality of an automobile-centered transportation system, you lapse into a totally uncritical acceptance of the GM-et-al vision of a world of 90-100 mph individually-driven highway vehicles. Surely the waste, chaos, bureaucracy and hazardousness of the automobile system as a whole—local as well as long-distance—deserve at least a nod of recognition on your part.

Victor Wallis
Indianapolis

Courage

ALLEXANDER COCKBURN IS ONE OF MY REAL FAVORITES. I love his style, racy and vibrant, and his thought—honest to the core. In his hands the pen becomes mightier than the sword. How many writers have the courage to tell us about a side of Israel that can be both ugly and insidious? I choked when Alexander Amerisov (*ITT*, Feb. 4) called Cockburn a "moral midget." Maybe he thinks Rambo is a Demosthenes or Mother Teresa a terrorist.

But when Cockburn writes in his reply, "It's true that I don't spend so much time writing about the injustices visited upon Soviet Jews as about Palestinians like Han-iyeh. Why? Because everybody writes about the latter," he is guilty of wishful thinking. He means, of course, "the former." I, too, wish oppressed Palestinians got a fairer and broader press in this country. But I'd better hold my tongue, lest I bring upon myself the eternal wrath of those moral giants who monitor, defend and sanctify Israel's every heart beat.

Maurice Holloway
Edinboro, Pa.

Editor's note: Cockburn's reply was garbled as the result of a typographical error. He also meant "the former."

Mirrors

AS A 64-YEAR-OLD GRANDMOTHER WHO REMEMBERS radio days from before Woody Allen was old enough to listen and who was only a few years older than Dorothy when *The Wizard of Oz* first appeared, I was fascinated by the Lawrence Swaim explication of the text of L. Frank Baum's *Oz* books and Pat Aufderheide's frustration with Woody Allen in the review of *Radio Days* (*ITT*, Feb. 18).

I once took a research course that cautioned about trusting the memory of someone who is old. But I suspect my memories of both *The Wizard of Oz* and the real radio days are like most of my generation—neither were about real life. But we ate them up.

After 40 years on the left, I, too, have trouble with people who cannot see behind this modern snake oil, but I doubt that we can blame the artist who romances the world. This kind of artist is a mirror reflecting unrealistic fantasies while bringing relief from social pain in the form of escape. What both L. Frank Baum and Woody Allen once again demonstrate is how unpolitical they are. We keep asking why can't they be more like us? But the more interesting ques-

tion is, how do you educate people to seek escape into politics rather than that modern opiate of the people—romantic fiction and movies and network TV? Woody Allen's career is an interesting case history of someone brought up on such a diet. Is that why he has been in analysis all these years?

Patricia Robinson
New York

Garbage

THE ARTICLE ON THE FIGHT OVER CONSTRUCTION of garbage-to-energy plants (*ITT*, Feb. 11) exemplified the weaknesses of the so-called progressive position on this issue. Contrary to the citizen action movement organizers, this is not a simple good-bad debate. Choices must be made as to the least dangerous and damaging way to dispose of the massive amounts of waste produced by our affluent society. Highly respected scientists and environmental leaders disagree on the merits of garbage-to-energy plants. Among those who say the plants are necessary is the American Lung Association.

You called garbage plants designed to last 20 years a short-term solution. In the face of social and political reality, this is farcical. Organizing already alienated citizens whose neighborhood is about to be invaded by a garbage plant is easy. It's a lot easier to prey on the fear and ignorance of these citizens than to try to organize around the underlying cause of the garbage and trash—the throw-away society fostered by the economic forces of capitalism. If that could be accomplished in the next 20 years, it would be an amazing victory.

The political reality is that even feeble returnable-bottle laws required years-long struggles in the handful of states where they have been enacted. Among the opponents of these and all other packaging regulation proposals are the packaging industry and, of course, its sycophants in organized labor. Meanwhile, the corporations continue with impunity to produce the wasteful products that force society to cope with increasing volumes of trash. They use wasteful production methods and also leave behind the hazardous chemical by-products of manufacture that are poisoning the air and water.

Martin J. Waters
Wallingford, Conn.

Unconscious

YOUR DECISION TO PRINT OLIPHANT'S EDITORIAL cartoon on the recent wave of student activism in China (*ITT*, Jan. 21) was devoid of any racial or socialist political consciousness.

Oliphant views communism (and, by extension, socialism or any leftist form of gov-

ernment) as inevitably repressive, unyielding and mechanical. For what other reason would he have prominently displayed the red star of China on the floor, another star on the woman's hat and a picture of Chinese soldiers marching? These symbols simply reinforce the notion that the evils of communism caused all the troubles in this inferior, colored people's land.

It is also by no accident that Mr. Oliphant pictured the communist parents eating and drinking, paying absolutely no attention to their child. Communists are seen as having become so ideological that they no longer care about their children. And since children represent the future, communism holds no future for its people; future is only possible through so-called democratic capitalism.

The supposed inherent evils of communism (or socialism) coupled with the supposed inferiority (and therefore helplessness) of people of color has time and again justified U.S. military and economic intervention in the Third World. It is appalling that you, as editors of this self-proclaimed socialist newspaper, propagate such values on your editorial page. In so doing, you attack all of us, all people of color.

Hubert K. Chang
Wallingford, Pa.

Takeover

IDON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT RICHARD RYAN OR the *Texas Observer*, but I do know Israeli-sponsored disinformation when I see it and this is what Ryan is offering us (*ITT*, Feb. 11). He asks us to believe that Israel's intelligence agency, Mossad, was willing, on its own, to reveal its government's collusion with the U.S., not only in providing weapons for Iran but, as it turns out, for the contras as well, thereby exposing the leading figures of the Israeli government as a pack of liars, in order to save a handful of its agents from spending, at the most, a few months in a U.S. federal prison. Given the willingness of U.S. officials to overlook past Israeli transgressions, even this would be unlikely.

Surely, Mossad must have known that the Israeli-contras connection (which, curiously enough, Ryan does not mention) would become a major source of embarrassment to the Israeli government and to its supporters in Washington who have campaigned against contras aid. We are asked, instead, to accept the word of a Mossad agent that "to sacrifice a Jew in trouble anywhere for expedience is horrendous; it betrays the fundamental principles on which Israel was founded.... Not a day goes by without many people thinking of the Pollards."

Ryan then suggests that the Reagan ad-

ministration "do the gracious thing and let the Pollards slip off to Israel." He asks us to accept the extraordinary notion that the administration has betrayed Mossad. This will come as startling new, even to critics of U.S. foreign policy.

As for the saving of Jewish lives being a "fundamental principle on which Israel was founded," the sorry record of Zionist leaders in Palestine and the U.S. on the eve of the Holocaust tells a different story. The well-documented record shows they were more concerned with building a Jewish state than saving the lives of Europe's Jews. In his famous book on the subject, Ben Hecht described their behavior in a single word with which he titled the work, *Perfidy*. The Argentinian Jews, Jacobo Timmerman and others, who were imprisoned and tortured while Israel was selling its latest weaponry to the neo-Nazi Argentinian generals, would no doubt agree.

Some will say this is all old history, but let us not permit Mossad to use the pages of *ITT* to rewrite it. The next thing you know we'll be reading about "a land without people for a people without land."

Jeffrey Blankfort
San Francisco

Best

ONCE MORE, DIANA JOHNSTONE HAS WRITTEN an excellent article (*Perspective*, *ITT*, Dec. 17, 1986), and if I could afford it I would make up all the canceled subscriptions she mentioned. But it should be stated clearly once that Johnstone's reporting from Europe and the Mideast is by far the best in all the U.S. media. I have had experience in all the countries Johnstone reports about and I still maintain contacts there. I can say without hesitation that her reporting is superb, accurate, incisive and unusually insightful. I would hope that no amount of canceled subscriptions would discourage her or *ITT*'s editors.

Reto Pfith
Grafton, Vt.

Deja vu all over again

THE PRESIDENT CANNOT REMEMBER WHETHER HE ordered the missiles fired before or after the Russians fired theirs.

God help us!

Art Liebrez
San Rafael, Calif.

Editor's note: Please try to keep letters under 250 words in length. Otherwise we may have to make drastic cuts, which may change what you want to say. Also, if possible, please type and double-space letter—or at least write clearly and with wide margins.

SYLVIA



IN THESE TIMES MARCH 18-24, 1987 15

Palme

Continued from page 13

position was led by the conservative *Svenska Dagbladet*, which accused Palme of a "double-bottomed foreign policy" that was concealing a sell-out to the Russians.

Enter the *New York Times*: Swedish media attention quickly turned away from Agrell's motive analysis on March 1, the day after the anniversary of the assassination. That day *Svenska Dagbladet* published large excerpts of a *New York Times Magazine* article by Richard Reeves. According to Reeves, his own month-long inquiry involving more than 100 interviews in five countries had produced "strong evidence" that investigators might have been restrained and misled by the Swedish government and foreign ministry. He did not say what this "strong evidence" was, beyond citing some unnamed Swedish officials as not wanting to know who killed Palme.

Reeves wrote that some anonymous Swedish officials, including cabinet members, had concluded that "Palme died because of his clumsy involvement as a mediator in the Iran-Iraq war at the same time that Swedish arms makers were illegally shipping weapons to one side, Iran." Since Watergate, star reporters for major U.S. newspapers enjoy a reputation as intrepid truth-seekers. Reeves' accusation against Sweden's Social Democratic government dominated the front pages of Swedish newspapers for days.

The "Iran-Iraq track" came just in time to replace the worn out Kurdish track. The two have a lot in common. They point away from Swedes and other Westerners toward the Mideast and beyond. There is no evidence, and still less motive—just the insinuation that Iranians or Iraqis, if angry, would easily turn to assassination. And finally, like the Kurdish track, the Iran-Iraq track comes from intelligence sources.

"Regardless of who knew in Sweden," wrote Reeves, "secret service agencies of other countries have offered the Swedish government information indicating that Palme's murder might be traced to his decision to block arms deliveries to Iran after illegal sales of surface-to-air missiles, howitzers and gunpowder became public in late 1985."

Two secret service agencies used to offering information to Sweden are the CIA and Mossad, which also have a clear motivation in passing along such information to an American journalist. The Reeves story indicates that even virtuous Swedes engage in illegal arms deals—just like the CIA and Mossad. At the other end of the spectrum, this possibility arouses the active interest of the Swedish peace movement, which has been vigorously denouncing Bofors arms exports. In an interview at the foreign ministry in Stockholm, the chief of foreign trade, Carl Johan Aberg, expressed great "surprise" at

the Reeves article. "We have strict separation of the government and the police," he told *In These Times*. If a foreign service gave information it would be direct: for instance, from the CIA to SÄPo, without passing through the foreign ministry. Other experts, such as noted criminologist Leif G.W. Persson, said it was untrue that the government had blocked investigation of the Iran-Iraq hypothesis.

Aberg called Reeves' claim that Palme's friends did not want to solve the murder "a fantastic thing to say." Palme's friends are especially keen to have the crime solved, but have to rely on police, he said. "We never heard Reeves was here," said Aberg.

In his article Reeves noted, "There are a lot of news leaks in Sweden, where freedom-of-the-press laws make it a crime for officials or employers to try to find the source of leaked information." Thus Reeves' sources, whoever they are, are safe.

Agrell noted that Reeves' article took two tracks, alleging arms smuggling by the Bofors company to Iran, which might be true (the matter is under investigation) and a link to the Palme assassination, which is much less plausible. Agrell noted that while Bofors' gunpowder smuggling appears confirmed, the charges of knowingly exporting the RBS 70 missile to Iran is in doubt. The RBS 70 contains many U.S. components that are under embargo, and Bofors must have a U.S. license for each missile it exports. Agrell thought it unlikely that a big company like Bofors would defy the U.S. embargo and risk being blacklisted.

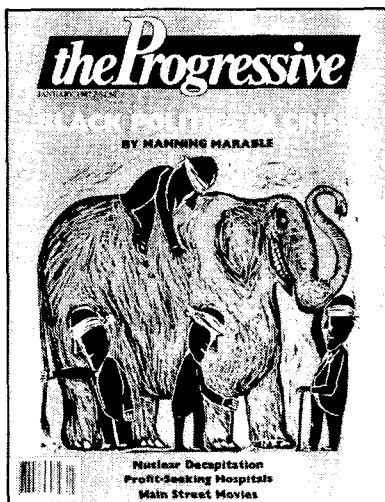
On Jan. 15, Rear Adm. Karl Fredrik Algeron, the chief of the Swedish military inspection responsible for granting export licenses, was killed when he fell in front of a subway train in Stockholm a few days before he was due to testify in the Bofors investigation. Swedish public opinion is divided over whether his death was murder or a suicide disguised as an accident.

An arms export scandal exists around Bofors, but any linkage to the Palme assassination is pure speculation. Aberg insists that since channels exist for granting or stopping exports, Palme would have taken some secret personal measure, such as stopping shipments to Iran in 1985, as Reeves alleged.

There are "no gray zones," said Aberg. "Either an export license is granted or it is not. Arms exports to Iran since the Iran-Iraq war broke out are strictly illegal. The investigation into Bofors is to be concluded later this spring.

On the other hand, it seems that the Palme assassination investigation will never be concluded, but will simply fade away. ☐

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ASHES & DIAMONDS

By Alexander Cockburn

Can the Press Save the Presidency?

Since the fundamental role of the official press is to provide reassurance, reassurance has been provided in ample measure. Barely had the president gabbled his way through his contrition speech on March 4 before pundits and politicians were on hand to say that, yes, Reagan had adequately demonstrated contrition for deeds of the past and determination to do better in future and now the nation had best put the whole sorry scandal behind it.

In fact, the president demonstrated no such contrition and had nothing at all to say about the Nicaraguan end of the scandal. But the mesmerized urge to sustain the Reagan cult for two more years proved overwhelming. In his commentary the day the Tower Commission's report was released, NBC's John Chancellor caught this servile idiom perfectly:

"But the Tower Commission accuses him of no actual crime, only the sin of inattention. And Ronald Reagan, with all his skills, ought to be able to handle that accusation. He has one very big thing going for him. Nobody wants him to fail. Nobody wants another Nixon. He should be able to build on that, as he reshapes his image and his administration.... He has been wounded, but not crippled by the Tower Commission...."

This is more or less the line served up on all the networks and in most of the editorial columns. The most glaring misconception is obviously contained in the line "Nobody wants him to fail." Who can Chancellor have been talking to? Millions of people in the U.S. want Ronald Reagan to fail. They want him to fail in circumstances of utter humiliation both for himself and his co-conspirators. They want the delicious drama of another Watergate to last, day by day, hour by hour and minute by glorious minute till the curtain finally falls on his odious administration.

But the people, like Chancellor, who say that no one wants Reagan to fail are the same people who insist, night after night on the TV screens, day after day in the newspaper editorials, that the president "still commands enormous affection on the part of the American people." Who says? According to *Newsweek's* poll published in its March 9 issue, more than half of the American people disapprove of the way he's handling his job; less than half have personal confidence that he would "do the right thing" (i.e., tell the truth or avoid blowing up the world). Another poll shows a majority thinking him a liar. This is enormous popularity?

Those World-Weary Europeans

Another technique by which the official press seeks to inoculate the public against the notion that criminal liars have been running the country these past six years is to suggest that everyone else in the world, particularly sophisticated Europeans, are baffled by the public uproar in the U.S. about the conduct of the Reagan gang. This genre was equally popular at the time of Watergate. Here's a typical report, from CBS for February 25:

Rather: The secret deal that supplied the Ayatollah with U.S. arms has produced a whole new picture of President Reagan in Western Europe. As Mark Phillips reports, it is not a flattering view.

Mark Phillips: European cartoonists have always had a good time with Ronald Reagan, but as the Iran arms scandal drags on, a new image is emerging, a wrinkled image of a more vulnerable president who is taking a beating. [European cartoonist Forattin drawing of an aged-looking President Reagan]

Anthony Howard (British newspaper editor): There is bewilderment that you are prepared to tear yourselves apart, you are prepared to, as it were, lacerate yourselves over something which, in European eyes, would not ever have been a major scandal.

Phillips: It's not just the American willingness to publicly embarrass its president that has Europeans confused. It's also President Reagan's inability to fight back and contain the damage.

Franco Ferrarotti (Italian sociologist): Well, I may say that in Italy, as well as over—all over Europe, really, the thing does not look like a tragedy. It's more like a comedy.

Frank Johnson (British columnist): Well, I think people are thinking, where—where's the sex?

Phillips: The Europeans say they know about scandal and how to handle it. In the 1960s, when a British cabinet minister was caught sleeping with a prostitute who was also sleeping with a Soviet military attache, the cabinet minister fell, not the prime minister. Recently, when a politician who was also a famous author was involved with a prostitute, he resigned and one politely avoided the subject.

Jeffrey Archer: I'm sorry about the weather.

Phillips: When the French sunk a Greenpeace ship and a man was killed, the defense minister resigned, but few Frenchmen asked what President Francois Mitterrand knew and when he knew it.

Philip Moreau de Farges (political analyst): A man of state must be cynical, must be realistic. He must not be naive.

Phillips: He must also not be weak. Ronald Reagan, as the Europeans see him, now looks like a very old man.

Ferrarotti: We really are afraid right now in Europe. We are afraid that, especially as we are confronted by a dynamic new Soviet leadership, I think, really, we are afraid of not having an equally effective American leadership. This would—this would be a disaster.

The moral of these endless "what's the big deal" stories is that a properly run nation will have no compunction about blowing up the *Rainbow Warrior*, to take the case of France, or raiding the BBC to stop it airing a film about military satellites, to take the case of Thatcher's Britain.

This is not to say that the airwaves have been utterly devoid of good, critical material. ABC News, on February 25, had an excellent report from its correspondent Karen Burnes on how the U.S. had been working with South Africa to provide aid to the contras. Burnes called it a "vest-pocket operation run by CIA Director William Casey outside all normal channels." Burnes went on: "State Department and intelligence sources

tell ABC that the CIA's then-Latin American Division Chief Duane Clarridge traveled secretly to South Africa to solicit aid for the contras, a trip the CIA denies. At the time Clarridge reported directly to CIA Director William Casey and was the agency's point man for the contras. Several months later Safair Freighter, a South African cargo company, opened an office in the United States. U.S. official said Safair is involved in covert operations for the South African government. On the same day it incorporated, Safair signed a lease with Southern Air Transport, known for its past relationship with the Central Intelligence Agency. Safair provided planes to Southern Air, planes that were used to fly weapons to the contras....

"In March [1986] CIA Director Casey made another secret visit—this time to South Africa. Sources tell ABC that during that period a deal was being discussed in high-level policy sessions in South Africa and in Washington. The deal was South African assistance to the contras.... ABC News has learned that one month later, after Casey's visit to South Africa, retired Air Force Gen. Richard Secord, high deputy Richard Gadd and a man described by others present as Lt. Col. Oliver North met with Southern Air Transport pilots in a safe house in San Salvador. There they were told that third-country nationals would fly weapons into Nicaragua. American officials say that some of those nationals were South African. At the same time, the debate over economic sanctions against South Africa was heating up. Congress voted for sanctions and Reagan vetoed them. He was later overridden, but press reports indicate that the South African government was pleased at the president's actions. The CIA has denied that former Director William Casey solicited funds for the contras during the time when Congress considered it illegal."

A Blunt Proposal

The full extent of the Reagan gang's efforts to overthrow the Sandinistas remains to be assessed by the investigating committee in Congress, whose pertinacity is open to doubt. Since the official U.S. press maintains a rigid trade embargo on foreign news stories, much useful material remains unknown here. Take, for example, this November 28 story from the Mexican newspaper *Excelsior*, headed "U.S. proposed to Costa Rica to start war with Nicaragua." The Costa Rican ambassador to Mexico, Angel Edmundo Solano, was minister of public security in his country between 1982 and 1984. "When I was minister, one day Curtin Winsor, U.S. ambassador, came to visit and to tell me that it was time to 'extirpate the cancer' [the Sandinistas of Managua] and that the best thing would be to contrive a maneuver whereby Costa Rica would be attacked by members of a supposed foreign army, which he knew perfectly well would be a disguised army [of contra provocateurs]. Costa Rica would then denounce this act of aggression and invoke the Interamerican Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance so that the U.S. would go into action."

Ambassador Solano said that when he

turned down the idea, Winsor departed in a dudgeon and soon thereafter he, Solano, became the target of a "ferocious smear campaign." He resigned on Aug. 31, 1984.

Reagan officials have long been fond of calling for the cancer of Nicaragua to be excised. "Nicaragua is a cancer and we must cut it out," Shultz shouted to an audience at Kansas State University. He may not have known that he was quoting Adolf Hitler, almost to the word, on the topic of Poland. The rest of his remarks had a soundly Hitlerian ring, too: "Negotiations are a euphemism for capitulation if the shadow of power is not cast across the bargaining table."

Shultz remains a darling of the official press, which offers him as a person of restrained integrity, contrasting delightfully with the mucky plumbers in Reagan's White House. This deference is echoed in the scarcely credible deference offered outgoing FBI director and incoming CIA boss, William Webster. The chorus of enthusiasm for this Nixon-appointed judge overwhelmed even the applause for the appointment of that CIA dirty trickster Frank Carlucci to his present job as chairman of the National Security Council. Webster is the man who approved Abscam, which raised entrapment to the level of art. On his watch, to use a phrase beloved by Reagan, Frank Varelli was recruited by the FBI to spy on CISPES, the anti-intervention in El Salvador group, and to be in regular contact with the death-squad organizers in El Salvador, telling them about visiting Americans (including nuns).

Varelli was told by his FBI bosses that CISPES was a terrorist organization and that he should compromise its leadership. This is exactly what the COINTELPRO program set up by J. Edgar Hoover tried to—and often did—achieve. According to Varelli, two of his FBI bosses broke into Bethany House, where some nuns who ran CISPES lived and worked. He says he knew the break-in took place "because of the documents, the papers from those break-ins from the description they gave me of the offices.... The agents that I worked with said that they didn't give a damn about law. Laws apply to civilians, to some of the people, but not to the FBI." In his sworn affidavit, filed in Dallas, Varelli also said, "I conversed regularly by telephone with the [Salvadoran] National Guard wherein I was instructed to exchange information between the FBI and the Guard. I regularly told the National Guard the names of people who had been deported from the U.S. to El Salvador. In addition, I told the National Guard about American citizens who are traveling to El Salvador who were not friendly to Reagan's policies."

So far, none of this material has been quoted as reason for Webster to undergo serious scrutiny. Newspaper and TV reporters did not bother to consult possible critics of Webster such as the ACLU, the Center for Constitutional Rights or known Websterphobe Nat Hentoff. The FBI was deeply involved in the surveillance and arrests of seven Arab Americans in Southern California. Perhaps some member of Congress will seize this opportunity to put some hard questions to Webster at last. After all, if the wretched Gates could be forced out of the running for the CIA job because of his involvement in the scandal, what about Webster, who suspended for a time an FBI investigation into contra drug-running in Miami. ■

Stop the presses—tear down the front page

Reading the News
Edited by Robert Karl Manoff
and Michael Schudson
Pantheon, 246 pp., \$19.95

By Jim Naureckas

UNLIKE ITS COMPANION BOOK, *Watching Television*, *Reading the News* has not been widely excerpted in the press. Probably the medium that brought us soap operas and *Love Connection* seems sexier than the essays on Who, What, When, Where and Why (and sometimes How) that editors Robert Karl Manoff and Michael Schudson have solicited for *Reading the News*. It's tempting to say that the press is afraid of introspection, but the book's critique is mostly skin deep.

Reading the News does help debunk the myth of objectivity journalists wrap themselves in, showing that Who an "authoritative source" is determines who defines the news; that What reporters consider news is very much a subjective judgment; that even Where and When are "facts" that depend on an inherently political understanding of geography and history. By the time the book gets around to Why and How, newspaper writing looks so mired in subjectivity that any self-respecting journalism professor ought to run screaming.

Objectivity's demise ought not be mourned too long. The concept can be dangerous, since it implies that adherence to a set of stylistic conventions—third person narrative, attribution of information to official sources, an aversion to adjectives—can guarantee a godlike impartiality. All truth is relative, and any selection from the universe of observations is necessarily subjective.

But there's a difference between admitting the philosophical impossibility of objective news, and accusing the press of having a consistent bias—and that's a line *Reading the News* doesn't seem to want to cross. This is particularly true in "The Grisly Truth About Bare Facts," Carlin Romano's essay on What, which is arguably the central piece since "facts" are supposed to be a newspaper's bread and butter. Romano is careful to cite examples where subjectivity favors the left (with loaded terms like "contras" and "Star Wars"), not just the right.

Leon V. Sigal, writing on Who, is somewhat more willing to admit that there is a bias towards authority in mainstream news reporting, that "tacit alliances form between reporters and officials." Yet to what does he attribute this in the typical journalist? The desire "to be greeted pleasantly when he walks into an office."

Again and again in this book, any

pro-establishment bias detected in the press is explained in terms of reporters' "organizational routine": the need to meet deadlines, to minimize legwork, and so on. That this all adds up to support the status quo is seemingly coincidental.

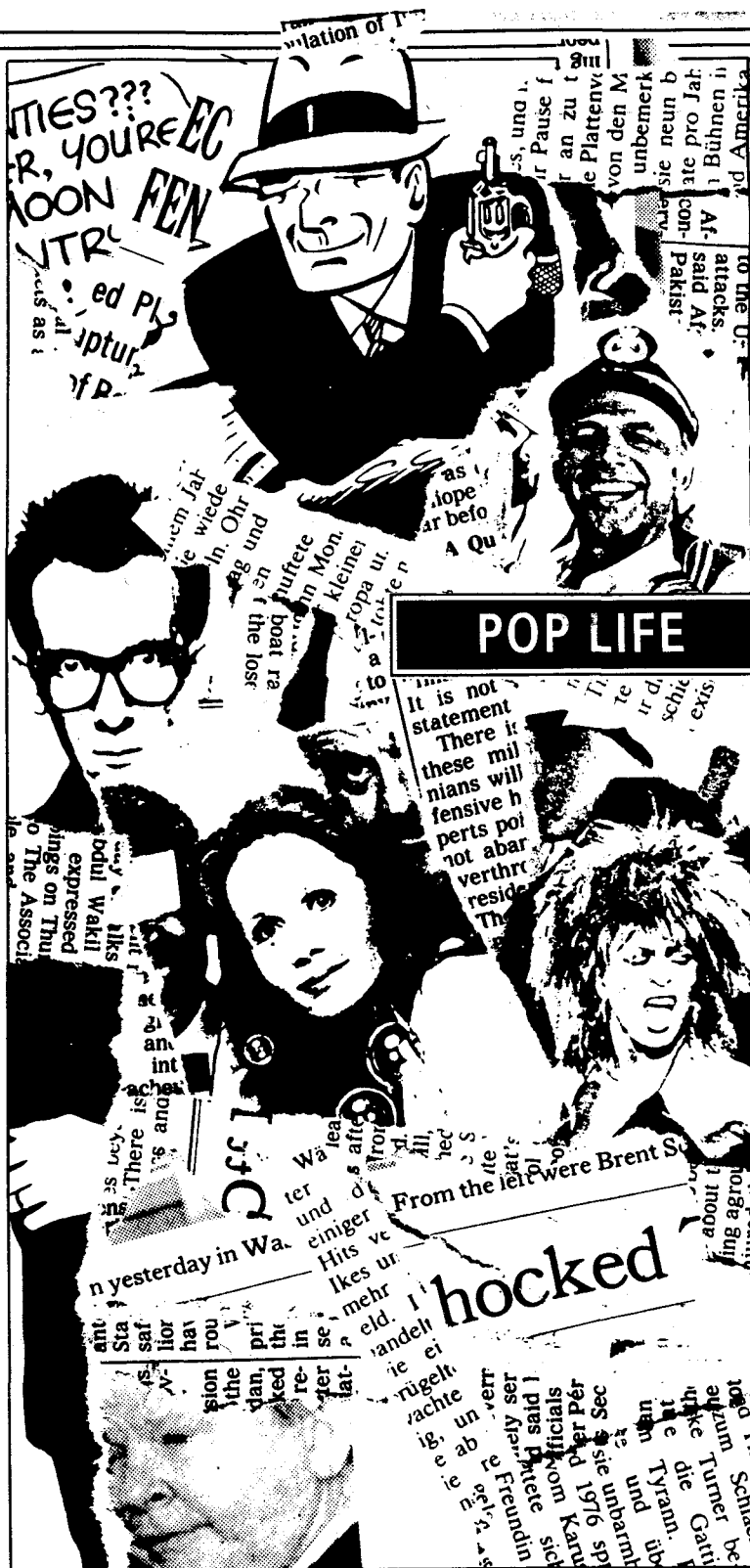
Holes in the story: One expects *Reading the News* to examine the impact of the corporate nature of the American press on its news coverage. But the newspapers these reporters work for don't even seem to have editors, much less publishers, boards of directors and stockholders. One essay even makes reference to "the more or less neutral support of advertising."

It's amazing how much of the book mimics the practices it criticizes. Just as the press, in its fear of ideology, limits interpretations to the narrowest technical causes, so too *Reading the News* refuses to see journalism as imbedded in a larger system where news is a commodity, where the sale of consumers to advertisers often outweighs the sale of papers to readers, and where publishers are powerful members of the establishment their papers report on.

A cynic might suggest that the Gannett Center for Media Studies, funded by the largest newspaper chain in the country, whose support the editors gratefully acknowledge, has something to do with this approach. But as the book points out, "American journalism is deeply imbedded in American culture," and so is American journalism criticism.

Occasionally the book manages to break past these limits: James W. Carey's history of the American newspaper, in the section on Why and How, attempts to place the press in its economic context. And Daniel C. Hallin's "Cartography, Community and the Cold War," the best of the bunch, uses the question of Where to show how newspapers create a community of readers (*USA Today* is his extended example) while at the same time telling that community where they are in the world—on the free world side of an iron curtain, for instance. Hallin doesn't see journalism in isolation, but as part of a web of social, economic and political forces, which gives his criticism a depth too much of the book lacks.

The editors rightly note that "a given news framework...will come to seem natural (rather than ideological) to readers unfamiliar with alternatives to it." And the "value-free" language of academia must have seemed natural to the writers involved with this project. But their refusal, for the most part, to address the power relations that underlie journalism protects those who control the news we read from any real criticism.



Iain Chambers' urban renewal: pop goes the city

Popular Culture: The Metropolitan Experience

By Iain Chambers
Methuen, 180 pp., \$29.95 cloth,
\$9.95 paper

By Eric Lott

WHEN BRITISH CRITIC RICHARD HOGGART insisted on the "meaningfulness of much popular art" about 30 years ago, he issued a powerful challenge to the prevailing left views of popular culture—anti-capitalist hostility and populist sentimentality. He had too much faith in those who found their pleasure in pop culture to dismiss it as the cynical manipulation of popular taste by the "culture industry." Yet he had no illusions about the inherent worth of art made or bought exclusively by "the people."

Without either form or condescension, he believed pop music, writing and film had a legitimate claim on our attention.

Popular culture is now an academic "field," and discussion of it has suffered a predictable loss of vitality. A vigorous case for it still needs to be made. Certain critics associated with the Contemporary Cultural Studies program Hoggart founded at the University of Birmingham have intelligently undertaken this project, but high-powered dismissals and weak-kneed relativisms still occupy too much of the contemporary left debate. Some post-structuralists talk gloomily of the "penetration of the sign by capital," meaning the total corporate conquest of symbolic production in our society, while pessimists like Christopher Lasch lament the privatizing self-involvement encour-

aged by the consumerist orientation of popular pleasure. Such cautionary voices temper those of hands-off liberals who claim that individualism is a good thing and that audiences in a class society are entitled to the "taste culture" they choose.

In this relatively indiscriminating context, anyone like Iain Chambers who knows the difference between a B-Boy and the BBC has my sympathy. Situating himself in the tradition of Hoggart, Raymond Williams, Stuart Hall and others, Chambers in *Popular Culture: The Metropolitan Experience* knows there's more to TV and rock 'n' roll than corporate manipulation or commodity fetishism.

Pop culture, he argues, rejects the "narrow access to the cerebral world of official culture" and offers instead "a more democratic prospect for appropriating and transforming everyday life." While it's in no sense a working-class culture, some of it, because it has to link up with popular desires, is imbued with a sense of popular rights. In his survey of the spaces, images and sounds of urban cultures, Chambers emphasizes the "daily, inventive evidence of local control, local meanings and a continual construction of sense that passes beyond the instrumental logic of the 'culture industry.'"

For Chambers, the oppositional edge of the popular has been made possible by the specific social circumstances of the city. Noting the mid-19th-century abandonment of the British city to the poor and working class, Chambers observes that suburbia's "Other" was left in a position to decisively shape an important segment of urban culture. Traditional British activities were resituated and transformed, or simply ignored; the sobriety and self-restraint preached by union leaders or the middle class were often elided. A "new recreational nexus that frequently existed outside the workplace and paternalistic control" was in the making, a culture "destined to flourish without the aid or approval of intellectuals and the native traditions they and others were so keen to defend." This nexus was crucial, above all, for its potential to change from what was certainly an alternative culture—mass-circulation newspapers, detective stories, advertising, radio—into an adversarial one in moments of weakened hegemony.

The most satisfying parts of Chambers' history demonstrate how this momentary resistance comes about. If pop culture's arena is the marketplace, Chambers is quick to remind us that in certain situations consumption can become an important ground of class conflict and identity-making. He describes the Saturday-night hedonism of extravagant clothes and pop music that resists cultural subordination and "attempts to create a perpetual 'weekend,'" as well as the secret languages of

youth-style *bricolage* that render commercial objects and contexts into a "precise and imaginative conquest of their circumstances." Both are attempts, as Norman Mailer said of graffiti, to hang your presence on their presence, to carve a space of communal resistance out of the oppressiveness of routine.

While *Popular Culture* successfully locates such resilience on local turf, it also demonstrates that pop institutions can influence broader social change. Those who reject out of hand the transformative value of mass communications must confront the fact that radio—still an important site of black and Hispanic cultural conquest—was instrumental in the spread of black music after 1940. By the end of the '30s, Hollywood owned most of the music publishing in Tin Pan Alley. When it tried to filch more profits

from radio royalties, radio stations set up their own publishing companies. Forced to look elsewhere for its material, radio found scores of segregated black artists whose music slowly but surely began to infiltrate the airwaves. (Chambers doesn't mention the rise in black-owned radio stations, which is just as important.) When Ol' Blue Eyes is at elbows with Count Basie, racial barriers begin to break down.

Because *Popular Culture: The Metropolitan Experience* suggests that corporate hegemony is gap-toothed, less total than some critics believe, and because it's alive to the fact of pleasurable, site-specific resistance, the book is valuable as a critical history of what's at stake in pop from *film noir* to punk.

Chambers' case is easy to overstate, however, and as the book proceeds he seems increasingly sanguine about the frequency and

possibility of pop-cultural transgression. The book's blandly inclusive title indicates an eagerness to invest everything with the same pre-determined liberating potential rather than attend to its moments and means of triumph. Chambers is particularly myopic when it comes to gender; try as he might to make even fashion

Pop culture is now an academic 'field' and has suffered a loss of vitality.

magazines liberating (their "pleasures" and "ambiguities" somehow "slip beyond the male grasp"), he comes up short. In emphasizing the healthy and important resilience of individuals and local groups, Chambers overstates this resilience in a way that Richard Hoggart once warned was just "another form of democratic self-indulgence."

Chambers finally settles for a fashionable post-mod freakishness that seems no more than an updating of Susan Sontag's "One Culture and the New Sensibility" (1965). Besides trading on a lot of pop-art jive about an anti-elitist "aesthetics of expendability" (popular-art-as-chewing-gum) that supposedly breaks down canons and hierarchies, Chambers celebrates his subject's potential simply because "almost anyone can buy" it.

He absurdly infers from all this that "today" distinct high and low cultures have disappeared, and tend more to "coexist" in a "contemporary eclecticism": "High culture" becomes just one more subculture, one more option, in our midst." Like Sontag's more earnest poetics of leveling, such one-culture utopianism barely disguises its wishing-away of the pressing facts of cultural domination in a class society. Why detail the radical force of pop culture if you're going to forget what it's up against?

High culture is still "official cul-

ture," and is still inaccessible to most people—they haven't been allowed to see it as "one more option." The popular matters because it offers moments of human complexity outside official culture that temporarily escape the taming influences of class domination. It's "deeply unsocialist," as Stuart Hall once wrote, to think no one resists a diseased culture's tendency to flatten human desire, and the advocacy of *Popular Culture* is a partial corrective to much of the current debate. But it's also foolish to ignore that dominative tendency. The popular is *negotiated*, every day, in the gaps and spaces of social hegemony. It isn't purely oppositional and it isn't wholly imposed. It's an arena of cultural struggle, and to dismiss pop culture, or embrace it uncritically, is to deny the continuing importance of this struggle. ■

Eric Lott is a New York writer whose work has appeared in *Caribbean Review* and *South Atlantic Review*, among other publications.

Playing remote-control roulette

Watching Television

Edited by Todd Gitlin
Pantheon Books, 248 pp., \$19.95

By David Browne

IN THE EYES OF EDITOR/WRITER TODD Gitlin and the six other contributors to *Watching Television*, the tube should not be trusted, much less taken lightly. It is a world where the network news is a shameless flag-waver for the New Right, where Saturday morning children's shows are manipulative program-length commercials for toy products and where the formerly revered father figure has been reduced to a helpless buffoon via smarmy situation comedies. It is also a world where the worst attributes of the Reagan era—greed, selfishness, a preoccupation with image over content—are brought to the fore and used to ensnare an unsuspecting public.

As paranoid as that may sound, the seven essays that compose *Watching Television* make convincing arguments for those and other disturbing theories on the effects of the small screen. Gitlin is author of *Inside Prime Time*, a thoughtful probe of television from the failure of *Lou Grant* to the success of *Hill Street Blues*. In *Watching Television* he has assembled a compelling, intelligent anthology that, in his words, relates television to "the nature of life in the late 20th century." And, as you might imagine, that picture is not a particularly pleasant one.

Yet just as television networks deal with the quandary of entertainment vs. information, *Watching Television* suffers from its own contradiction: from its correlation of music videos to "post-modern art"

to its use of such terminology as television's "paternalistic vision," this is a book written by intellectuals for intellectuals. Hence, as good as *Watching Television* gets, it periodically trips over itself through an overintellectualization that threatens to capsize the book.

Faking it: This aspect is most evident in Michael Sorkin's "Simulations: Faking It," which should have been, but isn't, one of the book's best essays. In his introduction, Gitlin makes a case for television's increasingly homogenous nature—in particular, the diminishing line between reality and fantasy. Using wrestling shows, *The People's Court* and *Puttin' on the Hits* as examples, Sorkin picks up on that intriguing theme and runs with it. But he runs literally off the field.

Pinpointing early examples of real-vs.-fake like *The Bionic Woman* and *Knight Rider*, Sorkin writes, "They are technically primitive, retaining a crude anticipatory recognition of the moment of crossover, not yet fully engaged with the presentation of seamless equivalence." Are we talking about the same David Hasselhoff here? Any reader's bullshit detector will certainly stop at lines like: "simulations serve primarily as an implement for the creation of continuities across the range of broadcast quanta, to further establish the principle of equality among images." A more clear and vivid example of television overanalysis could not be found.

Likewise, Ruth Rosen's piece on soap operas doesn't tell us much we don't already know about how these shows promote "harmony, homogeneity...and considerable stability" for an audience that wants to be comforted by a sense

of community. And Pat Aufderheide's chapter on rock videos, "The Look of the Sound," is well thought out and well-researched, but ultimately dated: given MTV's declining ratings and its slowly weakening grip on the music industry, any article that takes music videos this seriously (the piece was written circa 1981) reads as current as a Culture Club album sounds.

Such minor gripes aside, rarely has television been covered as passionately and articulately as it is in even the weakest chapters of *Watching Television*. Daniel C. Hallin's scathing piece on TV news, "We Keep America on Top of the World," makes a riveting case not only for the subtle injection of "conservative rhetoric" into network news but also points to the Cold War-like "us vs. them" nature of news coverage. (Contrast that with *TV Guide's* ongoing bashing of the news for being too liberal, and see which ends up as the more convincing argument.) Using the 1985 TWA hostage crisis in Beirut as his principal example, Hallin paints the network news' use of headlines like "America Held Hostage" as the broadcast equivalent to *USA Today's* pseudo-populist "We" format. Hallin also sees the news' black-and-white distinction between good and evil as a prime example of the networks playing catch-up with Reagan's own warped view of the world.

While all seven essays in *Watching Television* disseminate the effects of Reagan on this medium—Gitlin's own piece, "Car Commercials and *Miami Vice*: 'We Build Excitement,'" makes a strong case for the connection between the cool, sleek world of automotive ads and the macho Gipper-era image of the

Great American Loner—none does it as concretely as "The Shortcake Strategy," Tom Engelhardt's exploration of the state of children's television. Tracing the earliest "character products" back to the '30s and into the '60s (with such short-lived kids' shows as *Hot Wheels*), Engelhardt explores a world filled with mechanical sci-fi cartoons like *He-Man* and *Transformers*—series that are outgrowths of toys, and not the other way around.

According to Engelhardt, the rise of the product-oriented kids' show is linked to Reagan's 1981 appointment of Mark Fowler to head the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). In turn, Fowler (who is quoted as saying that "television is just another appliance. It's a toaster with pictures") deregulated children's-TV guidelines, which gave

The seven essays in *Watching Television* make convincing arguments for some disturbing theories about the big effects of the small screen.

stations an open invitation to run as many commercials as they could cram into each show. Engelhardt paints a vivid, chilling picture of the result of that deregulation: a seemingly innocent world—Saturday-morning cartoons—violated by an \$8.5 billion (as of 1985) "character products" industry. It's enough to make any parent unplug his or her television set forever.

Mark Crispin Miller's 45-page "Prime Time: Deride and Conquer," the longest piece in the book, ends *Watching Television* on an appropriately pessimistic note. Opening with his theory of "TV's promise of eternal choice" (it presents all the materialistic goods we could ever hope to afford), Miller wanders from the slick world of commercials-as-programming to the fall from grace of the sitcom father figure (Robert Young was much more dignified than Bill Cosby ever will be). "The sitcom betrays the self-destructive tendency of the social Darwinist ideal," he writes, concluding with a seething attack on TV's nurturing of a condescending, "jeering" audience. Curiously, though, he makes little mention of David Letterman, one of the most popular exemplars of this theory.

More cohesive than it probably sounds, Miller's essay leaves the book with a bad aftertaste. "Everybody watches it, but no one really likes it," Miller concludes of the tube. "...Its only champions are its own executives, the advertisers who exploit it and a compromised network of academic boosters." But in Miller's (and the other contributors') reluctance to cut the medium any slack whatsoever—despite the presence of such genuinely fine series as *St. Elsewhere*, *Cagney* and *Lacey*, *Newhart* and *Our World*—*Watching Television* falls prey on another level to the same black-and-white, good-and-evil rhetoric as Ronald Reagan. It also leaves the reader with an unsettling feeling: would any of these writers be caught dead watching the very shows they've discussed? Perhaps, but the mere fact that this question comes to mind makes clear a dichotomy that the overall success of *Watching Television* cannot resolve. ■

David Browne is managing editor of *Music & Sound Output* magazine and a pop-music columnist for the *New York Daily News*.

By Pat Aufderheide

Madman Mark

Mark Fowler, Reagan's man chairing the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), is leaving. The man who as a radio announcer went by the moniker of "Madman Mark" and at the FCC was dubbed "the James Watt of the airwaves" was proud to call his policies "unregulation." Fowler told broadcasters that they weren't trustees of the public airwaves, despite the 1934 Communications Act; under the rubric "Back to the Future" he told the phone industry that competition would obviate old-fashioned regulation. Fowler is an ideologue, not a politician, and it may have been the list of enemies he has made in Congress that forced his decision to resign rather than face renomination hearings. Not all business interests were delighted, either. He angered Hollywood with deregulatory rulings that favored TV networks over producers and alarmed cable operators with his let-the-phone-companies-get-into cable attitude. Some broadcasters, threatened with takeovers and mergers, wondered whether old-fashioned regulation didn't have its advantages. As Fowler cleans off his desk, the results of his "unregulation" are piling up.

Logbooks: Fowler's FCC lifted requirements that stations keep logbooks to show their community service. Community groups used to be able to use such records as a check on station responsibility and, if push came to shove, to file a petition to deny a license renewal. The number of such petitions to deny has since declined, but the number of complaints to the FCC about programming has risen—showing, one scholar argues, that problems exist but aren't being addressed constructively. (A court decision has forced the FCC to at least require a quarterly list of a station's best efforts in community-oriented programming.)

Sales: Lifting the "trafficking" rule—which had forced new owners to invest in their stations by requiring that they hold them for at least three years—meant that nearly half of the TV and radio stations in the country went on the block over four years; 25 percent were traded within three years—some within one week. Prices soared, which meant budget cuts for programming. The first victim? Public affairs, of course—on both radio and TV. The recent round of budget cuts at CBS news is the latest reverberation from this bombshell.

Affirmative action: Fowler's FCC argued that preferences given to minorities and women in granting station licenses are unconstitutional. Even with preferences, only a handful of TV and radio stations are owned by minorities and women today. Meanwhile, the FCC's equal opportunity regulations in broadcasting have languished. A study by the Office of Communication of the United Church of Christ shows that minorities and women have lost ground since 1980 compared with their numbers in the labor force—especially at the networks and in the new satellite services, which are virtually unpatrolled by the FCC.

Fairness doctrine: Fowler hates the Fairness Doctrine, which requires that broadcasters present controversial issues fairly. Broadcasters mostly regard the threat of a community group's request for balancing of viewpoints as an infringement on their freedom to sell airtime. By expending the resources on challenging the Fairness Doctrine's constitutionality, the FCC has encouraged broadcasters to shrug off the threat of Fairness Doctrine complaints. Fowler's aggressive assault on the Doctrine may eventually boomerang, though. Congress is riled about this flagrant flouting of law and common sense; hearings in both the House and Senate may even result in legislation strengthening the Doctrine.

Telephones: The FCC's new pricing policies for local phone service, including lavish depreciation policies for phone companies and the "subscriber line charge" that forces fixed payments onto the individual subscriber's local bill, have fostered a dramatic rise in the price of local service—some 39 percent. Long-distance prices have gone down, but most of us don't make enough long-distance calls to make up the difference. One public utilities commission called the FCC's policy the "Marie Antoinette school of rate design," or "let them make toll calls if they can't afford local service."

Regulation works: The Fowler era's strongest legacy, ironically, may be the case it makes for regulation—not only for social welfare and equity, but also for peace and productivity in the marketplace. The question, the record shows, is not whether regulation should be abolished, but what kind of regulation works best to secure gains while fostering opportunity. Unfortunately, that's not how the most likely FCC chair—Fowler's protégé at the Commission, Dennis Patrick, an ideological clone of Mad Mark—is likely to see it.

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ARTS



MUSIC

Hardcore Rasta-rockers, the Bad Brains (above), and rappers like RUN-DMC. kick the plodding dinosaur of Heavy Metal music.

Black metal: rocking it and talking it

By Eric Lindbom

HEAVY METAL BANDS COMPOSE one huge, lucrative slice of the rock marketplace that has steadfastly stayed whiter than a Shriner's convention. Last year, however, two charismatic, talented and extremely uppity black men, the rappers who are RUN-DMC., crashed the metal barrier in gloriously brusque fashion—once again proving that the myth that black folks can't "rock out" is so much Caucasian jive.

The magic moment occurred during a rock video (ironically, the very medium that cherishes stereotypes) when RUN-DMC., literally "crossed over" by breaking through a wall and joining white metal band Aerosmith in a rendition of "Walk This Way," the breakthrough single that would finally sell rap to whites (paving the way for the Beastie Boys, the white rap group whose *Licensed to Ill* album is now the nation's number one best seller).

What's so inspiring about the RUN-DMC. video is that it's not some maudlin stab at racial unity, like "Ebony and Ivory," but a fierce act of integration. In the boastful cadence of rap, RUN-DMC. are telling Aerosmith they can beat them at their own game—the metal game. Around the same time I first

caught this video, Bad Brains, four black men who practically invented hardcore punk music, had returned from a long absence with a stirring album tinged with heavy metal influences. Two black metal acts in the same year. Amazing!

Even though it can be argued that rock 'n' roll began when Chuck Berry wrote "Johnny B. Goode," a misconception raged that blacks were stuck in a funk mentality and couldn't possibly "rock out." The contradiction occurs because "rock 'n' roll" (Berry's baby) implies a shared, fun experience; it's democratic in nature. "Rocking out," in the finest metal tradition, is a more fascistic posture that entails deriving Skinner's "desired response" from the audience. This is accomplished by overwhelming an audience through (1) amplified decibels and electric guitar virtuosity for its own sake, (2) Grand Guignol orchestration and (3) overpowering imagery (when Madonna transforms from boy-toy Tramp to chaste Marilyn clone, she's rocking out).

The Hendrix factor: Jimi Hendrix brilliantly personified all three dimensions of one who "rocks out," and is justifiably revered by metal gearheads, but he's a conspicuous exception. Other black guitarists haven't measured up. As for "rock out" heroes, Prince has a dilemma—sure he can wank off on the guitar,

but he's too idiosyncratic and fey to be a rock messiah. When it was deemed appropriate to "rock out," Michael Jackson enlisted white Rock-out-star-in-good-standing Eddie Van Halen for "Beat It." Jackson's no dummy, even if he hangs around with a llama.

To fully appreciate what RUN-DMC. accomplished last year it must be remembered that they sold themselves as metal "rock out" stars and rap stars simultaneously instead of diluting both forms of music in the usually impotent, co-opted manner of most crossover attempts.

Up until last year, rap music was viewed as a purely black form of music made by blacks for black record buyers. Because it consists of a vocalist "rapping" (boasting to a spoken syncopation) along with the dissonant beats provided by a deejay's "scratching" (the dexterous, manual manipulation of a turntable to produce a stuttering vocabulary of found sounds), the record industry always viewed rap as "dance" (that spells black) music. Initially, most of rap's trenchant moments did result from the collision of repetitious, mind-bending rhythms and a street sensibility that was ghetto born.

But RUN-DMC. live in Queens and have never pretended to be streetwise. Instead, they've prided themselves on being iconoclastically nerdy (DMC.—Darryl McDaniels—raps about his prescription glasses). This geek chic allowed them to facetiously proclaim themselves the "Kings of Rock" and even trash Buddy Holly and the Beatles in a video to carve themselves some aesthetic breathing room so they could do their own thing.

That "thing" includes electric guitar. Since scratching is, by its very nature, made up of the kinds of clever borrowing that East Village gallery owners charitably call "the art of appropriation," why not steal from Led Zeppelin as well as Grandmaster Flash?

Under the tutelage of producer Rick Rubin, a Zeppelin-AC/DC freak who's masterminded their electric guitar-with-a-beatbox-beat sound, RUN-DMC. staked their claim. Their *Raising Hell* album confounded the racial demographics of a myopic record industry—it sold rap music to whites and metal to blacks. The final knife in the corporate gut—the album was released on an independent label and it went platinum.

What RUN-DMC. do with their new-found power should prove interesting. They've brought rap slang into the vernacular, and made a lot of money for Adidas, who make the shoes that the duo wears as a trademark. But on stage, they still cling to the rap convention of showboating, mike in hand, with accompaniment from their deejay

Jam-Master Jay. When a live guitarist joins them onstage, RUN-D.M.C. will be taking the giant leap.

A circle of metal: Bad Brains are a lesser known but equally influential act. Their relation to heavy metal is circular. They've inspired bands to invent a new hybrid of punk metal that Bad Brains themselves are presently learning from. What goes around does come around.

RUN-D.M.C. are second-generation rappers; they gave the genre a needed transfusion but didn't invent it. On the other hand, Bad Brains were one of the true pioneers of hardcore, a bastard child of punk rock that metal fans would have sneered at during its abbreviated heyday in 1980-81. Hardcore wasn't about art—only a handful of the albums made by hardcore bands will prove listenable five years from now. But Bad Brains made some of those enduring few, and right now they are making the best music of their lives.

Interestingly, though today's metal gearheads don't realize it, Bad Brains have helped dictate metal's present course.

Hardcore was the loudest/fastest music around—pure and simple. It was the logical and inevitable by-product of punk rock, a genre co-opted by the star aspirations of some of its brightest lights and eaten by its young who went on to form hardcore bands. Hardcore was/is a mind-numbingly fast barrage of abrasive noise and naked convictions so primal and minimal that it struck outsiders as obnoxious and inept.

Kicking the dinosaur: Blasphemous as it initially appeared, punk's radicalism had more to do with attitude than structure. During the '70s, after a decade of singer/songwriter introspection and a creeping harmlessness, rock music had fallen into a slothful hibernation. With energy and a facile nihilism the punk bands kicked the dinosaur. Yet, for all his attacks on

aging stars like David Bowie and Mick Jagger, the Sex Pistols' Johnny Rotten craved the spotlight. And Sid Vicious, clown prince of punk, was butchering Eddie Cochran songs right up to the end.

Hardcore bands embraced the democratic ethos of punk—the cult of the superstar was useless and anyone who picked up a guitar, regardless of musical chops, could

Black and white Heavy Metal crosses over and comes back again.

become a star. But hardcore bands took the disdain for celebrity a step further, forming an underground that thrived on facelessness. Loud, young and anonymous, hardcore bands substituted punk cynicism with a political awareness that could have been appreciated by the

left, if it hadn't been expressed so tumultuously.

With their crew cuts and military regalia, hardcore bands were often mistaken for Hitler youths. And the slam dance ritual of audience members diving off concert stages into the crowd wasn't viewed as participation but the equivalent of overzealousness at a Nuremberg rally.

That the hardcore bands weren't fascists was evident by their constant harangues against a police state that existed more in their minds than in reality. Jello Biafra, the lead singer of the Dead Kennedys (and the closest thing to a hardcore celebrity) is a libertarian, constantly challenging the censors who have gained increasing power in recent years thanks to the lobbying efforts of the congressional wives who spearhead the Parents' Music Resource Center (PMRC).

Bad Brains, good thinking: But Bad Brains differed from the composite picture of a typical hardcore band from the outset.

First, they were black and won respect from the hardcore clique that was often accused of racism. They did it with a miraculously precise brand of super-energized punk. Unlike many of the strident hacks who followed, Bad Brains were already serious musicians when they began.

They met while jamming in a basement jazz fusion band in Washington, D.C. Brains' guitarist Dr. Know was once a funk bassist who regularly worked cruise ships. Galvanized by the punk explosion of '77, they chose to play what would later be dubbed hardcore and have always been drawn back to it even after a break-up a few years back. Their rationale is that hardcore gives them the most direct way to relay their message of hope.

Far from being nihilists, Bad Brains wear dreadlocks out of conviction and not for show. The band is made up of devout Rastafarians and they sing and write about unity

Continued on following page

FILM



Marcelia Cartaxo escapes reality in a flight of fancy in *Hour of the Star*.

Some private stardom amid public obscurity

Hour of the Star
Directed by Suzana Amaral

By Pat Aufderheide

YOU'VE SEEN HER EVERYWHERE—or, better, you've looked right past her everywhere. She's an urban nobody, a hapless, luckless girl from the sticks. The Brazilian film *Hour of the Star*, a surprising hit in New York and now opening around the country, gives this nobody a name: Macabea. And on screen this lumpy kid becomes the center of filmmaker Suzana Amaral's attention. In two hours, you not only see her, but with a combination of horror, pity and fascination, you come to know her.

Hour of the Star elegantly translates into international film language the mandate of the Italian neorealists: to show you the life all around you that you never see. It

does so not only with the gritty presentation of life among the poor but by taking you inside their lives, indeed, inside their dreams.

The tale itself is tiny, although its import becomes tragic. We meet Macabea (Marcelia Cartaxo) as she dismally confronts an aged typewriter, smudging the copy with her greasy fingerprints. Her roommates and her office mate, the sexpot-secretary Gloria (Tamara Taxman), can barely stand her stench, and her boss can't use her work, but she barely registers their complaints.

Macabea is a loser, and her humility in the face of it is as exasperating as the fact itself. But that doesn't mean she doesn't have her moments of illumination and joy. They occur in moments that highlight the pathetic quality of her life: for instance, dancing alone to the radio on a stolen day off from work, in the room she shares with several working girls. And it doesn't mean she doesn't struggle to emerge

from her darkness. She solemnly memorizes informational nuggets from the news, treating them like mysterious treasures rescued from the dark of unknowing. The radio and the movies are Macabea's link with a world beyond her dank urban crawl. There, unbeknownst to the throngs on the street or her roommates or her boss, she's, yes, a star.

When Macabea meets a lout named Olimpico (Jose Dumont) in the park, she clutches at the unmentionable possibility of love. But Olimpico, a stubborn hustler with his own dreams and expectations, can't penetrate Macabea's dim consciousness. His cruelty is only encouraged when Gloria begins poaching on the affair. Gloria knows what she's doing, and tries to make it up to Macabea by introducing her to a fortune-teller (played by Fernanda Montenegro, a leading soap-opera star in Brazil) who might bring Macabea luck. What happens next is both tragic and transcendent.

Barely human: *Hour of the Star* is a film of empathy, not sympathy. No heroic romanticization of the proletariat here. The film at one level is an excoriating study of how poverty and ignorance can make a person be and feel subhuman. (Cartaxo, a stage actress whose personal beauty is only revealed at the end of the film, does an exceptional acting job, turning herself into a pudding of a presence.)

But armed with that stark honesty, it also reveals the spark of human spirit that survives even the stripping away of barest dignity. And that's the way in which the film becomes a tragedy—one that goes far past its location in the clogged proletarian anonymity of Sao Paulo.

Suzana Amaral drew the plot from a short story by arch Brazilian stylist Clarice Lispector. Faithful to the sense of the tale, Amaral dropped out an element critical to Lis-

pector: the voice of the anxiously bourgeois author, probing a life alien and yet juxtaposed to hers. That was the right choice, too. Amaral's intimate film style carries the shock of confrontation, the simultaneous quality of invasion and empathy that the interventions of Lispector-the-author did in print.

It's not as if Amaral is any less distanced in real life from her subject. She too belongs to a comfortably professional background, as a member of an artistic Sao Paulo family. This is her first feature, although she's in her 50s, because she spent the first part of her life bearing and raising nine children. Her child-rearing completed, her marriage over, her energy unquenchable, she proceeded to film school first in Sao Paulo and then at New York University.

The film thus participates in several traditions. Masterfully manipulating the classic and international personal narrative mode, it also draws on the tradition of Brazilian *cinema novo*. Beginning in the late '50s, Brazilian filmmakers struggled to find an authentic film vocabulary for the Brazilian experience: a way, in a culture labelled "underdeveloped" and under the heel of Hollywood, to be truly popular, both in the sense of appealing to an audience and striking a chord with fundamental themes in their culture. Filmmakers like Nelson Pereira dos Santos, Ruy Guerra and Glauber Rocha took different stylistic paths, but they all created a legacy on which Amaral and others today build.

In the Brazilian film movement that is the legatee of that pioneering wave, there are a few women—not only Amaral but people like Tizuka Yamasaki (*Gaijin*) and Ana Carolina (*Sea of Roses*). And they are enriching the central question, one of cultural autonomy in mass and international art, with perspectives unimaginable in the past.

ble in the past.

Both sides now: *Hour of the Star* is one of the most successful of recent Latin American films to carry out the mandate to be popular in both senses. It works most profoundly by its contrast between the subjective and objective views of Macabea, and by its establishing of links between the two.

Macabea, as we and her acquaintances view her, verges on the disgusting. It's not her ignorance or her grunginess that's appalling, but her abysmal humility, her inability to make a full connection with others in the tawdry world of the poor. But in lyrically hypnotic moments, often in dreamy slow motion, we go with Macabea into the twilight zone of media fantasy, into the cheap industrial dreams where we all can leap from being nobody to the exceptional presence that shines on the nobodies, without becoming ordinarily human and social.

And that contrast in the pathologically helpless Macabea reveals, ironically, the bitter strength that keeps the rest of the characters going. Because they, too, live split lives. Gloria and Olimpico also know that twilight zone, where hopelessness is translated into magical success. It's just that they're more agile at making the largely-imaginary connections between dream and real-life opportunity. If they're irritated by Macabea, it's in part because she represents the abyss into which they are struggling not to fall, the abyss that they refuse to see at the peril of despair.

Hour of the Star is a film that opens your eyes. What you see both appalls and enthralls you. It's a film that never flinches at the impoverishment of the soul in industrial society, yet refuses to deny the existence of that soul even under the most brutal conditions. ■

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Bad Brains

Continued from preceding page

and the need to eschew the trappings of Babylon. Yet, unlike many reggae musicians, their heads aren't lost in a pot haze and their thoughts aren't expressed mystically. Bad Brains remain defiantly grounded in reality. The title of their most recent album, *I Against I*, poses the dilemma faced by the realist with the heart of the idealist—how to reconcile the world with a world vision.

Bad Brains don't sing about wanting to torch the world yet they've watched ghettos burn. They took up residence in New York after being driven out of Washington, D.C., where they were banned from performing because of mayhem supposedly caused by their audiences. In interviews, Bad Brains insist the reasons ran deeper—skin deep. All the band members felt that if they'd been white that the ban wouldn't have occurred. Bassist Darryl has said that even before the ban, they weren't allowed into the clubs where they performed unless they were working that night.

Phoned-in vocals: Little has changed for the band in their hometown. They returned to D.C. for the *I Against I* recording sessions. The D.C. Cops, ever suspicious of Jamaicans, tailed lead singer H.R. and busted him on a marijuana possession charge. His vocals on one of the album tracks were recorded over the phone from his jail cell.

H.R.'s screams, blurts and accusations fuel a Bad Brains' performance because he's lived what he sings about. H.R. has all the venom of a pissed prophet on his last leg. Darryl and Earl, the rhythm section, pummel right along with him at a breakneck pace. Yet, live, the band often shifts from blistering, hard-

core tirades one second to intoxicating, roots rhythms (like a reggae cover of "Day Tripper") the next. These wild, tortuous tempo changes from supple-slowburn reggae to heart-racing hardcore are meshed beautifully into one cohesive sound on *I Against I*. That record, released by SST and available in more adventuresome stores, is a synthesis of rhythm and 10-ton guitar chords. Supplanting their old jackhammer beat with a bottomless funk thud, the new Bad Brains are as dense as a black hole.

Earlier I referred to Bad Brains as metal—perhaps that definition should be amended to read metal by proxy. Today, hardcore is almost extinct but it has obviously influenced the army of speedrock bands that are suddenly becoming the fastest trend in teen rock music. Bands like Metallica, Venom and Megadeth owe a big debt to Bad Brains.

Speedrock fulfills the dream so many frustrated rock critics have projected on that plodding behemoth—heavy metal. These new bands have all the volume and percussive thunder of Black Sabbath but also display an energy that's as revolutionary as punk and hardcore once were.

The speed metal bands strive for that same metallic drum crunch that RUN-D.M.C.'s producer Rick Rubin has trademarked. And the new higher speed limits show that Bad Brains' decade of work didn't fall on deaf ears after the hardcore underground dissipated.

With *I Against I*, Bad Brains are taking cues from the very speed metal bands they once inspired. That's a healthy sign of unity. Let's hear it for black and white metal. ■

Eric Lindbom is a New York-based freelance writer whose work has appeared in *Matter* and the *East Village Eye*, among other publications.

Warhol

Continued from page 24

was indifferent to anyone else.

MM: Wow. So what did you say?

AW: Well, I couldn't believe St. Peter would take a *journalist's* word for it; they're such notorious liars and everyone knows they're not too smart. But he said I had to speak up for myself. So I reminded him of how I made that hideous portrait of Richard Nixon in 1972, with his face colored ugly shades of blue and green, and it said, "VOTE McGOVERN" at the bottom in big black letters. I made that for the McGovern campaign people so they could sell prints and raise money. I made silkscreens for Jimmy Carter's and Ted Kennedy's campaigns, too...even Tom Hayden. I also made ones for the New York Association for the Blind, and for wildlife organizations, not to mention all the ones I did for people in the arts who needed money.

MM (Giggles): It's funny that we both were kind of involved with the Kennedy family...

AW: Well, you were the lucky one. I never got to have an affair with *any* of them. But I did make a lot of art with JFK in it...and, of course, Robert Kennedy was shot two days after I was, so there I was...upstaged...just like this time. I could hear it on TV while I was lying in my hospital room, and I thought I was dead in Heaven, watching a re-run of Jack Kennedy's assassination. That's what I figured you did in Heaven, watch re-runs.

MM: And it turned out to be true.

AW: Sort of.

MM: How did they finally decide to let you in here?

AW: Well, I don't want to go into the boring

details of art criticism, but they looked over all the nice things that really smart people have said about me over the years, and decided I probably meant well. They really liked it that I was a lot less pretentious and pompous than some other artists.... I was always polite to everyone and didn't go around spouting all these heavy-duty theories designed to make me look smart and everyone else stupid. They really hate that at the Pearly Gates.

MM: So how are you going to spend Eternity, Andy?

AW: Well, obviously, there are a lot of people up here whose portraits I'd like to do. I loved America so much, I'd love to do all the important Americans: George Washington—although I did do him in my dollar-bill painting...George Washington Carver, since he invented peanut butter...Calamity Jane, so wonderfully masculine and violent... I could go on and on. Though some of the most interesting people aren't here, unfortunately. Like Lizzie Borden. But the truth is, I don't really have to do any art, since you don't need money up here. I can just do what I really like: go shopping, eat candy, watch TV, take snapshots of all the celebs. It's hard to say, I haven't really gotten the feel of things up here yet, so I don't even know if there are any statements that need to be made with art. For now, it's nice just getting to hang around with you...JFK...Edie...Elvis...and all the other interesting people up here.

MM: You have to admit, though, in spite of all the big names here, it's boring.

AW: Not as boring as my movie about the Empire State Building. ■

Marisa Bowe is a television producer living in New York.

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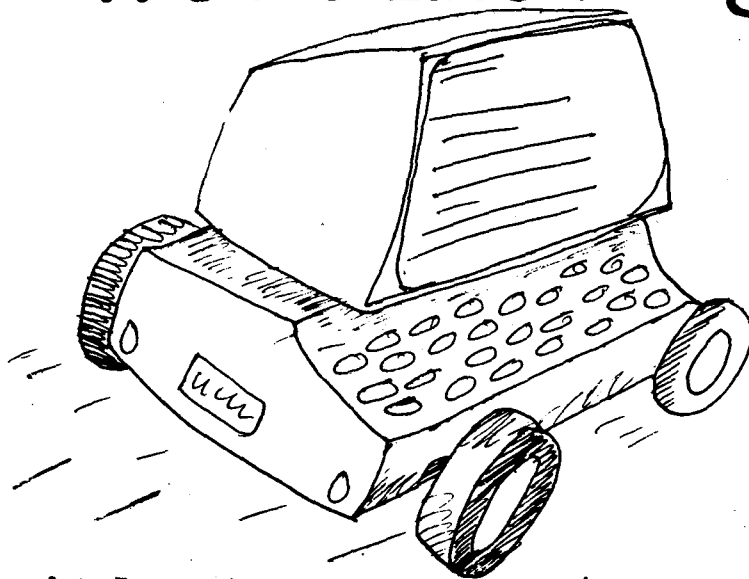
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March 26
"Democracy in Latin America: Taking Power Away from the Military," with George Black, Associate Editor of *The Nation*, recently returned from a trip to Chile, Argentina, Uruguay and Colombia. Thursday, March 26, 7:30 p.m., New School, 65 5th Ave., Room 205. Sponsored by Campaign for Peace and Democracy/East & West, Committee on Liberal Studies, Graduate Faculty, the New School. Free. For further info contact CPD/EW, P.O. Box 1640 Cathedral Station, NY, NY 10025. (212) 724-1157.

U.S./CANADA
March 30-April 16
The Case for Socialism, a speaking tour of the U.S./Canada featuring Steve Coleman of the Socialist Party of Great Britain and Richard Montague of the World Socialist Party (Ireland), sponsored by the World Socialist Party of

the U.S. Following are the cities, dates and local phone numbers to contact for information: NYC, March 30-April 1, (201) 568-5796; Grand Rapids, MI, April 2-4, (616) 453-0305; Charlottesville, VA, April 5-6 and Washington, DC, 7-8, (703) 894-5126. Victoria, B.C., Canada, April 10-12, (604) 382-5927; Toronto, Ont., Canada, April 14-16, (416) 699-0706. Topics to include: The War in Ireland, Capitalism vs. Socialism, Is a Third World War Inevitable?, Capitalism: The Economics of Insanity, The Relevance of Socialism to Workers in the 1980s, Unemployment, Its Cause and Cure, and much more. For details of dates, etc., write for free calendar of tour. WSP-US, P.O. Box 405, Boston, MA 02272.

PHILADELPHIA
April 10, 11, 12
"Voices of Dissent: A Symposium on the Arts as a Force for Social Change." Speakers include: Bernice Johnson Reagon, Guy Carawan, Elizabeth Catlett, Ronnie Gilbert, Sonia Sanchez, John O'Neal, Howard Zinn, Muriel Miguel, Fred Houn and Jonathan Ned Katz. At Drexel University, 33rd and Chestnut Streets, Philadelphia. \$15-\$50 includes lunch & theater discounts. (215) 662-0441.

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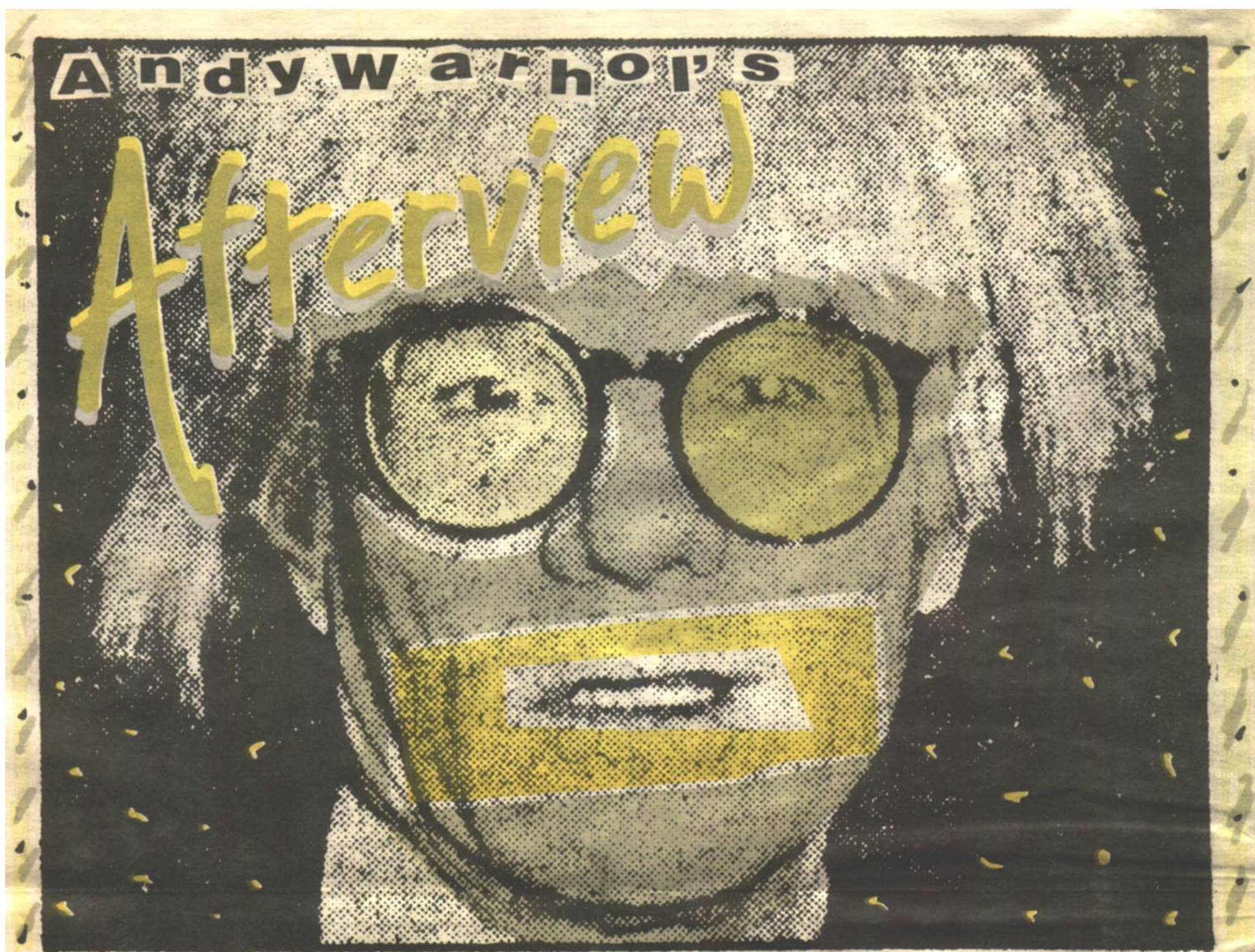
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Editor's note: In *These Times* writer Marisa Bowe set up her VCR to record a late-night showing of *The Blue Lagoon*, but accidentally tuned in an empty channel instead. What follows is a transcript of the audio; the video was mostly ghosts.

ANDY WARHOL WAS THE WORLD'S MOST famous living artist until he died early in the morning of February 22. Andy had a terrible fear of doctors, and always said he wouldn't survive if he had to go to the hospital for an operation. As usual, Andy's instincts were correct. He died of a heart attack after having had an operation to remove his gallstones the night before. The circumstances of his death were so unusual that the New York State Health Department is conducting an investigation. He appreciates that, even though it's too late to do anything about it.

Warhol grew up in Pittsburgh (not "the Czech ghetto of McKeesport, Pennsylvania," as he always claimed), and moved to New York in 1949 when he was about 20. During the '50s, he became one of the top commercial artists in the city. Once he became rich, he wanted to be famous, too, so he switched to High Art. The macho, hard-drinking Abstract Expressionists who then ruled the art world couldn't stand his art or his swishiness, but the zeitgeist was with Warhol, and he triumphed.

After his spectacular success as a painter, Warhol gave that up, too, and became a filmmaker instead. His movies, which foisted drug addicts, transvestites, raw sex and raw boredom (e.g., eight hours of the Empire

State Building in fixed focus) upon the audience, were even more controversial and notorious than his paintings. In 1969, he ventured into publishing with *Interview* magazine. And during the '70s and '80s, he became the most important pop hanger-on, a ubiquitous figure wherever the rich, the powerful and the famous were to be found.

Marilyn Monroe, sex goddess, was one of Warhol's earliest and best-known subjects. She interviews Andy in Heaven.

MM: Well, Andy, tell me, what do you think was the strangest thing about dying?

AW: That it happened. You know, I never liked doctors, ever since I was shot in 1968. I was rushed to the hospital, and though I was supposedly unconscious, I heard the doctors say I didn't have a chance. But then when my friends told them I was famous and had money, they changed their minds and went right to work. Ever since then, I always said that I wouldn't survive another operation. It just seems so corny that I turned out to be right. I always felt like my life wasn't really life, but television; but now I know it really *was* life, because if it *had* been television, the star wouldn't have died.

MM: What was the best thing about dying?

AW: The coverage I got in the *New York Post*. Although it kind of annoyed me that I was upstaged a little because Mick finally asked Jerry to get married the same day I died. I got the top half of the front page, but they put "Jail-Hell Jerry: I'll Soon Be Mrs. Mick" before me, on page three. I was on page four. Then the next day they started

having pictures of Fawn Hall sitting on her contra boyfriend's lap, and I kind of got lost in the shuffle. Outclassed by a couple of dumb blondes...no offense.

MM: You should talk. But you haven't told me what was good about it.

AW: Well, I love the *Post* because they always give their readers the really important stuff. Like the *Times* just had a big article on what a major artist I was and all that, and how I left almost all my money to make a new foundation for visual art. I mean, who cares? That's so boring. But the *Post* stories were great: ANDY WARHOL'S WOMEN: MOM WAS NO. 1... ANDY'S HOME AT LAST—Warhol buried next to best pal—his mom." That was a wonderful article. They quoted the priest—I guess he wasn't a fan of mine. He said I wandered far from my church. I was raised Catholic, you know. He said that nobody should take salvation for granted. I bet my family was happy to hear that. When I was doing portraits of rich socialites all during the '70s and '80s, I always said I thought it was part of my job to flatter them and make them look as good as possible. I always thought priests at funerals had basically the same job. I guess I was wrong.

MM: Is that the only story you got in the *Post*?

AW: No, the other one I really liked was "WARHOL GOES TO HIS GRAVE IN PAISLEY TIE AND SHADES." That one was tops. They started out by saying how all the other undertakers were jealous of the guy who got to do me, and how my coffin was gold-plated. Then they said how my New York friends kept saying I had to be buried in my sun-

glasses, but my family thought that was a pretty bad idea. They quote my sister-in-law, who's a Bible teacher, saying they, my family, could never figure me out, because I lived in my own world. That was wonderful coming from someone from Pittsburgh. Then they described my outfit, just like it was a fashion article: "Dressed in a black cashmere suit, wearing sunglasses; a shockingly loud paisley tie and the flowing mane of platinum hair...." Of course, my family finally insisted they take the sunglasses off.

MM: How did you end up here in Heaven?

AW: It wasn't easy. I'm used to getting right past the doormen, because in New York, a club really couldn't even be a club unless I went there...my presence there would make it a hot club. So when St. Peter stopped me at the gate, I was really surprised.

MM: How did you manage to get past him?

AW: Well, the whole thing seemed to hinge on whether I was a sincere artist or not while I was on earth. I got pretty worried when I heard that, because long after the rest of the Pop Artists were taken seriously, everybody kept arguing about whether I deserved to be, since I was such a party-hopper and loved being around rich, famous people, and did their portraits and stuff. So when I get to the Pearly Gates, there's a messenger up there, and he's giving St. Peter this copy of an article from the *Washington Post* that this guy wrote after I died, that said I was just a jester, not an artist, and that I dedicated my life shamelessly to the pursuit of wealth and publicity, and flattering the rich, and that I

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